Lifestyle / G1

Journey of faith through art

Metro / A24

Janjalani: From ASG to BCJ

Infotech / C1

Experts show how bar exam questions hacked

Tanong ng Bayan / A24

Kaso ni FPJ: Napulitika ba ang Korte Suprema?

Entertainment / D1

Her dreams died with her

'Robot' bares infighting among Sayyaf bandits

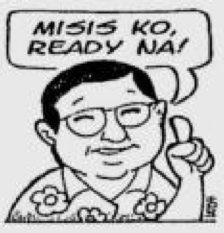
THE MORO bandit group Abu Sayyaf has about 300 fighters, maintains links with foreign militants but has been saddled by infighting among its leaders, a recently captured senior rebel commander has told military interrogators.

Abu Sayyaf leaders, including chieftain Khaddafy Janjalani, and foreign terrorists

ROBOT/ A9

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

This time, bets' spouses challenged to a debate

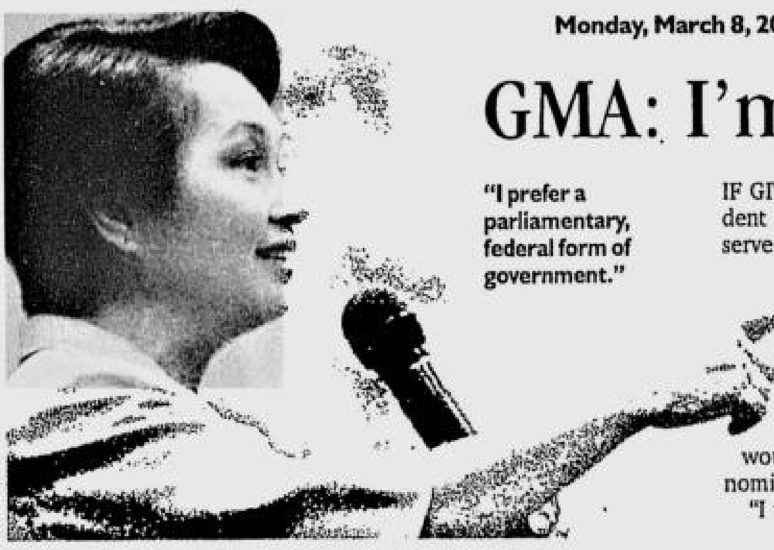

MISIS KO, READY NA!

By TJ Burgonio

DAGUPAN CITY—It's quite clear at this point that Fernando Poe Jr. has no appetite for debate. Does his wife, actress Susan Roces,

THIS TIME/ A20

Monday, March 8, 2004 ★★ 78 pages / 9 sections / vol. 19 / no. 91 P18 website: www.inq7.net



PDI PHOTO

"I prefer a parliamentary, federal form of government."

GMA: I'm willing to serve as transition president

IF GIVEN a fresh mandate on May 10, President Macapagal-Arroyo would be willing to serve as a "transition president" who would oversee the country's shift to a parliamentary form and federal type of government during her term.

Ms Macapagal told INQUIRER executives, editors and reporters on Thursday night that if she were elected to a new six-year term, her administration would focus on instituting political and economic reforms.

"I was not able to serve a full term. I was only able to make a strong start. So a new term would be for fundamental reforms," she said during the dinner meeting at the INQUIRER.

Ms Macapagal confirmed an earlier statement by Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. that she was willing to serve as transition president if efforts to change the form and type of government gained headway in Congress. In early January, De Venecia said Ms Macapagal had agreed to serve as transition president until 2007.

De Venecia and a big number of lawmakers had pushed for the convening of Congress into a constituent assembly to bring about a shift to a parliamentary setup and a federal system by 2007. The Senate blocked the House proposal, however, saying it preferred a constitutional convention to tackle any Charter change. Both chambers eventually ran out of time in a half-hearted bid to reconcile their differences.

During the dinner at the INQUIRER, Ms Macapagal said a parliamentary government under a federal system would spur develop-

GMA/ A20

I'm just here, Estrada tells journalists at AFP camp

By Christian V. Esguerra and Christine O. Avendaño

"SEE, I'M just here," former President Joseph Estrada told reporters yesterday at Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, where he is detained.

Wearing a red-striped shirt and khaki slacks, Estrada did not grant an interview but made himself available for about five minutes for a photo opportunity with reporters just inside the perimeter fence.

The Philippine National Police has tightened security around Estrada following reports that he was being allowed to sneak out of his detention cell to enjoy "house arrest" at his villa across from the camp.

More than 50 policemen, including members of the elite Special Action Force, guard Estrada at his jail inside the headquarters of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division at Camp Capinpin.

Hundreds of soldiers, including highly trained jungle fighters, also provide perimeter security for the ousted president, according to Chief Supt. Rolando Sacramento of the Police Security and Protection Office.

On Friday, Estrada said he could visit twice a week his 15-hectare estate some 100 meters from the camp.

Sacramento, the man in charge of guarding Estrada, said this could not be possible. "I visit him three times a week to personally check that he's where he's supposed to be," said the police official, who is facing possible criminal charges for allowing Estrada to stay at his villa.

Sacramento allowed a group of reporters to see Estrada upon the request of Maj. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, commander of the Army's 2nd ID.

I'M JUST/ A20

Top woman cadet adores 'super goat'

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—Retired Army Maj. Gen. Julius Javier, former commander of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' Visayas (now Central) Command, was the "super goat" of the Philippine Military Academy's Magiting Class of 1970.

Henceforth, he may also be known as the father of Cadet First Class Julia Javier, who ranked ninth among the 139 graduating members of PMA Maliyab Class 2004.

The PMA traditionally pays tribute to its goats—cadets who graduate at the bottom of their class—because merely finishing the punishing academic and physical course is an incomparable feat in itself, according to Maj. Edgard Arevalo, PMA spokesperson.

Growing up in the Army base at Fort Bonifacio, the young Julia had idolized her father.

"I was a student in La Salle when I

TOP WOMAN/ A21

Cory defends GMA treatment of Erap

WOMEN WATCH

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Two days before the celebration of International Women's Day, the winners of a national beauty pageant begin their reign. From left: Tracy Ann Javelona, first runner-up; Margaret Ann Bayot, Binibining Pilipinas International; Maricar Balagtas, Bb. Pilipinas Universe; Ma. Carla Bautista, Bb. Pilipinas World, and Jasmine Tiongson, second runner-up.

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RUDY ESPERAS

Members of the party-list group Akbayan stage a "Flores de Marso" march along Quezon Avenue in Quezon City to urge women voters to use the ballot to advance women's causes.

No basis for raps, says Drilon

By Raj Padilla
PDI Visayas Bureau
and Armand Nocum

ILOILO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo has found allies in former President Corazon Aquino and Senate President Franklin Drilon amid threats by prosecutors to file criminal charges against her for allowing deposed President Joseph Estrada to spend time at his villa across from a military camp in Tanay, Rizal, where he is supposed to be detained.

Aquino said she found nothing wrong with Estrada being allowed to stay at his villa.

"It's like a house arrest from the way I understand it. I'm not a lawyer, but I think it's good for President Macapagal-Arroyo," Aquino told the INQUIRER here.

Estrada is on trial on charges that he plundered some $80 million during his two-year rule that was cut short by a popular uprising in January 2001. Plunder is a capital offense without bail.

Aquino said that during martial law, her family had asked then President Ferdinand Marcos to place her husband, the late Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr., a political prisoner, under house arrest.

Like Estrada, she said, her husband was confined at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City after he went on a hunger strike to protest martial law.

The former President refused to elaborate, explaining that she didn't want to get involved in politics. "I would like to dwell on measures which will only unify the country," she said.

Aquino and Drilon were in Iloilo City on the occasion of the 12th National Convention of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Women Catholic Organizations at the Iloilo Grand Hotel. Aquino

CORY DEFENDS/ A20

Ex-Angeles bar girls engage in 'silent advocacy'

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

LINDA Lampera is in great company.

The former bar girl of Angeles City in Pampanga, who had logged almost two decades in the sex-for-pay industry, is among those featured in a sleek calendar-info planner published by a nongovernment organization, and she holds her own alongside 11 accomplished women, among them a congresswoman, a multi-awarded writer, an actress and a sportswoman.

Linda, now 45, has come a long way. But the way from there to here was defined by slips and falls, heartbreaks and penury, not to mention a degrading existence that she thought she would never be able to escape. But she did.

Linda is one of 15 former bar girls who run small businesses in Angeles' so-called nightclub district. No, they have not graduated into being club owners themselves or recruiters of young women for nocturnal jobs.

Linda and her friends have stayed on, in the same area where they used to work nights, but this time they work their butts off as small entrepreneurs (food stall operators, *sari-sari* store owners, etc.), quietly showing through their lives that they have what it takes to break free. They have been doing this for more than 10 years now.

Angeles was—and is again—famous for its girlie bars and flesh joints that come alive at night. At high noon, even on Sundays, one sees young women waving at male motorists, inviting them to come to the inn. Even during the day when the clubs are closed, something is going on.

In drearier corners, young girls could be had for less than ₱50.

For about half a century, the city hosted the US Air Force base until the Senate voted against the military bases' continued presence in Angeles and Olongapo City. The 1991 world-class Mount Pinatubo eruption hastened the Americans' departure.

EX-ANGELES/ A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern, Eastern and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY CHONA GALANG, PDI RESEARCH/03/08/04

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

SuperFerry yields 5 more bodies

By Tarra Quismundo

AUTHORITIES yesterday assured relatives of the still missing SuperFerry 14 passengers that search and retrieval operations would continue until all the passengers of the ill-fated ship had been accounted for.

Divers yesterday found five more bodies and two body parts inside the wreck of the ferry which caught fire 10 days ago in Manila Bay while en route to Bacolod and Cagayan de Oro cities with 899 passengers and crew on board.

At press time, the bodies had been taken out of the wreck which is lying on its side in shallow waters off Mariveles, Bataan. But the bodies had yet to be identified. Two of the bodies were female while the others were decomposed beyond recognition.

This brought to 21 the total number of passengers confirmed dead in the sea tragedy.

More than 700 passengers and crew have been accounted for but 110 are still missing.

The Philippine Coast Guard yesterday said that search and retrieval operations would continue. "We have not totally lost hope," said PCG Commandant Vice Admiral Arthur Gosingan.

Gosingan said they were concentrating the search and retrieval operations in the remaining 20 percent of the ship that had not been explored, particularly the A-deck, on the starboard or right side of the vessel.

"But because of the condition inside, the smell of the fumes of burned metal, and of course the bodies, the men have a hard time, though we try as much as we can," Gosingan said.

Debris of wood, twisted metal and kitchen appliances was also making search and retrieval operations difficult.

Gosingan said removing the debris might require the use of heavy equipment.

Sabotage ruled out

Survivors had said that shortly after SuperFerry 14 left Manila they heard an explosion before the ship was engulfed in fire. Authorities, however, ruled out sabotage as the cause of the blaze after the Abu Sayyaf group claimed responsibility for the blast.

Gosingan said investigators had yet to come to a conclusion on what caused the fire and explosion.

Gosingan said the PCG was still hoping that among the 110 missing, some had returned safely to shore, but had not reported to the PCG.

"We are hoping that it is still a possibility," Gosingan told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

He said that monitoring continues in Cavite, Bataan and Navotas in northern Metro Manila, where survivors were brought on the day of the tragedy.

Coast Guard Commodore Wilfredo Tamayo said that finding more survivors inside the wreck was "remote."

Identified

Tamayo, who oversees the search, rescue and retrieval operations in Bataan, said the five bodies were found in the A-deck of the ship yesterday.

Of the 21 bodies so far recovered, 11 have been identified. Those found on Saturday were the remains of Merlyn Morales de los Santos, May Jane Bueno, Juanita Yu and Tor Pamonag.

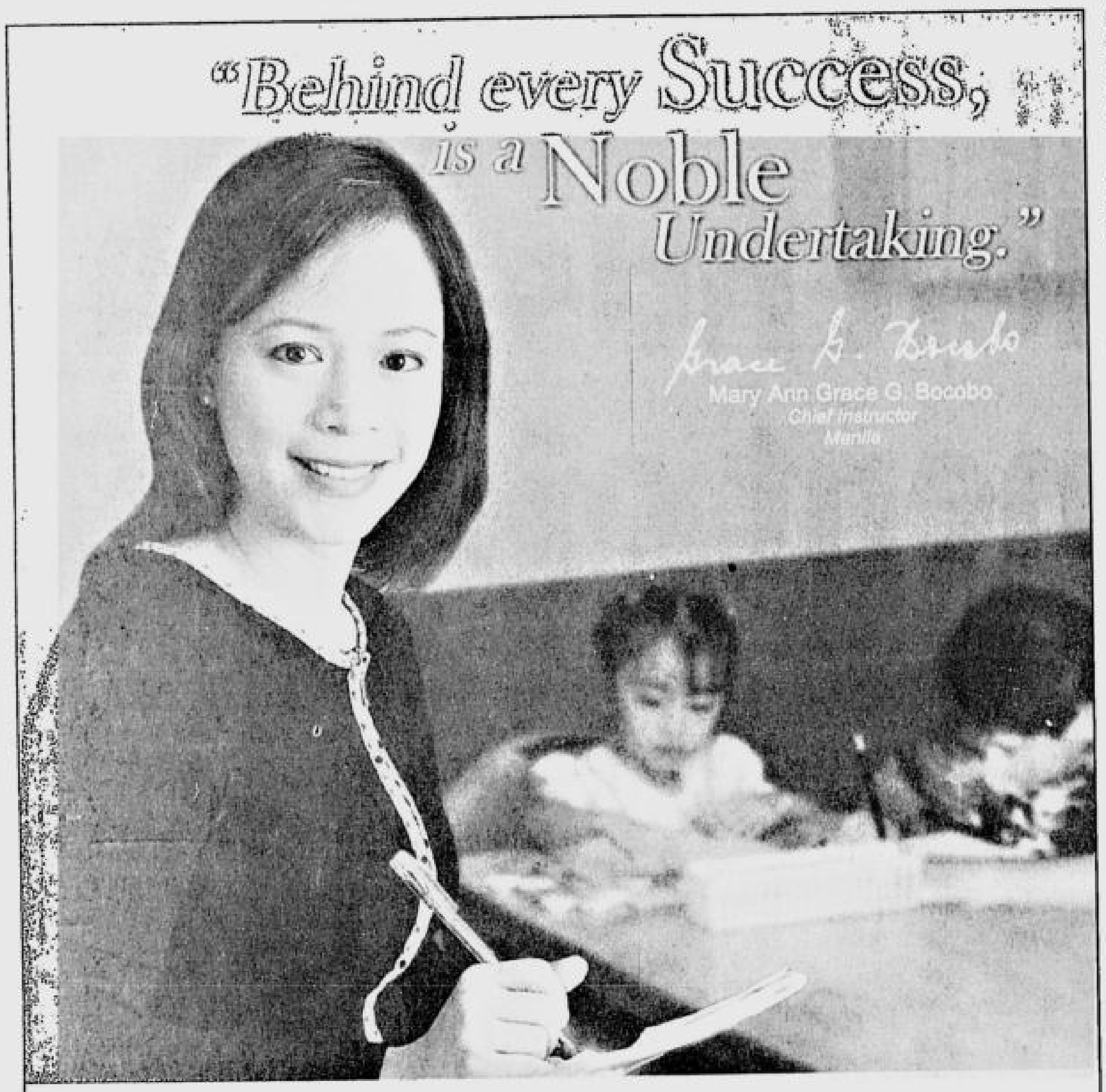
Seven others whose bodies were retrieved between Wednesday and Friday were identified by their relatives as Cristy Rubico, Clynn Paculba, Marilou Pamonag, Perlita Canasa, Emilia and Benito Asumbrado, and Nelson Juarez.

Body parts have also been found inside the wreck but Gosingan said that it would be difficult to determine immediately to whom these belonged.

Tamayo said the body parts "are essential in accounting for those missing."

Around 60 divers, personnel of the Bureau of Fire Protection, volunteer rescue teams from Makati, and scene-of-the-crime operatives of the Philippine National Police are jointly undertaking the search and retrieval operations, and investigation of the sea tragedy.

Gosingan said teams are again inspecting parts of the ship where they had gone before, to make sure they had not missed any part of the large vessel.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- *Cavite: GMA*
- *Bulacan: San Jose Del Monte*
- *Davao: Davao City*
- *Cagayan de Oro: Cagayan de Oro City*

Charity group set to file graft raps against Noli

By Norman Bordadora

OFFICIALS of a charity group yesterday accused administration vice presidential candidate Sen. Noli de Castro of trying to force their group to join the Kabayan Foundation and asking for P3.5 million in exchange for their membership.

Andrew Gonzales, national director of the Bagong Lahing Pilipino Development Foundation Inc., said the group turned De Castro down and received a bad press in the senator's weekly public affairs program, Magandang Gabi Bayan.

"We'd seen the white papers on the alleged corruption of Senator De Castro on the Internet, and we wondered why nobody had come out to tell on him," Gonzales said in an interview.

Monday filing

"The officials of Bagong Lahi will file graft charges against Senator De Castro before the Ombudsman on Monday. He was already a senator when he tried to extort money from the group," said lawyer Rio Espiritu.

Contacted for comment, De Castro said: "I categorically deny these charges. MGB doesn't do feature stories on foundations. It is an investigative show. Kabayan Foundation does not recruit organizations to be part of it. I dare them to show this MGB staffer who asked for money from them. It's good they are filing charges so that we could answer their allegations."

Timing is suspect

De Castro's spokesperson lawyer Jesse Andres said the timing of the allegations was suspect. "If this happened in February 2002, they should have already filed the case," Andres said, wondering why the group filed charges so close to the May 10 elections.

Election surveys showed De Castro leading opposition candidate Sen. Loren Legarda in the vice presidential race.

The officers of the foundation executed a sworn affidavit in support of possible criminal charges to be filed against the senator.

"This is not to get back (at De Castro) but a warning to Filipinos who still believe that De Castro is clean," the affidavit read.

The group was referring to anonymous stories of how De Castro allegedly made millions from features that either appeared or were kept from appearing on the public affairs programs he controlled at ABS-CBN.

Former name

The stories appear on the website http://bantay-media.iwarp.com/noliunmaskwed.htm.

In a joint sworn statement, six officers of Bagong Lahi said the group, then known as the East Pacific AAA Foundation, was featured on De Castro's *Magandang Gabi Bayan* on Feb. 2, 2002.

The foundation, which holds office at the Cattleya Condominium, Salcedo Street, Makati City, changed its name to Bagong Lahi in March 2003 because of the adverse publicity it got on MGB.

Misappropriated funds

Instead of featuring the foundation's charity work, MGB interviewed a former East Pacific member who talked about how the foundation's collections were misappropriated for the benefit of a few officers instead of being channeled to its charity work and beneficiaries.

Gonzales denied that East Pacific was involved in any irregularity. He said the group was recognized as a legitimate charity by the Securities and Exchange Commission, even under its new name.

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Mayoral bet shot dead in Pagadian City

PAGADIAN CITY—An unidentified gunman shot dead yesterday a mayoral candidate running under the 'Isang Bansa, Isang Diwa' party of businessman Eddie Gil.

Pagadian City police chief Supt. Alberto Detalla said candidate Isidro del Socorro was driving a Toyota Tamaraw FX together with his live-in partner identified only as Edwina when the incident happened.

Edwina told police that minutes before the killing, she noticed two men on a motorcycle tailing their vehicle. Upon reaching Bana Street were, another man flagged them down.

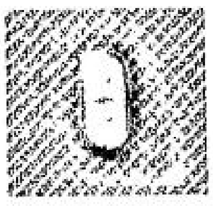
Edwina said Del Socorro seemed to know the suspect because they greeted each other. Moments later, the suspect shot Del Socorro with a .45-cal. pistol.

Police said they would soon release a cartographic sketch of the suspect.

Police said they are eyeing politics, a land conflict or a love triangle as possible motives for the killing. Del Socorro was a councilor of this city.

It was the second killing of a political candidate in the province in the past weeks.

On Feb. 27, Danilo Calibusan, who was running for reelection as a provincial board member, was gunned down in Bayog town, Zamboanga del Sur. *Hernan de la Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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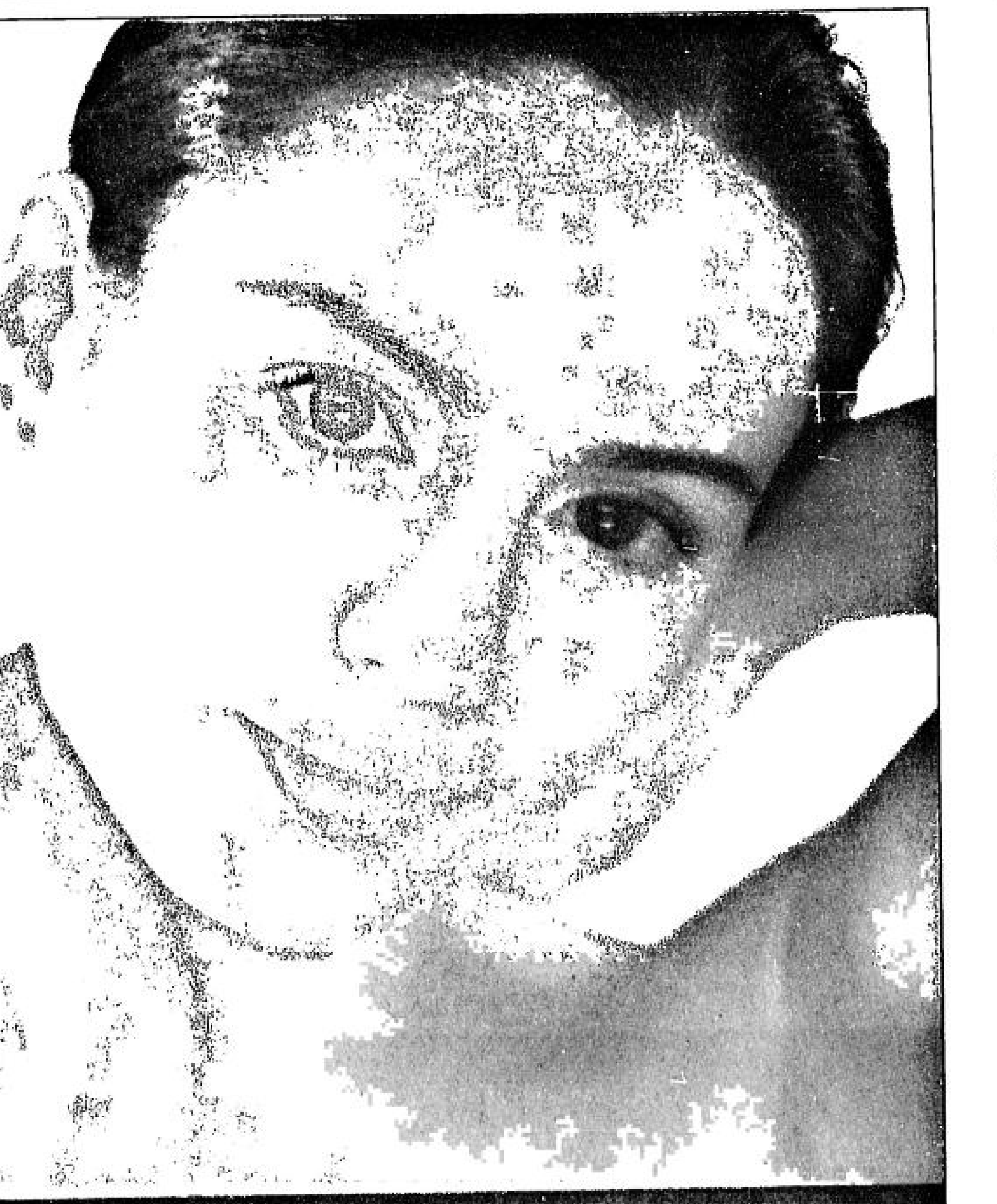

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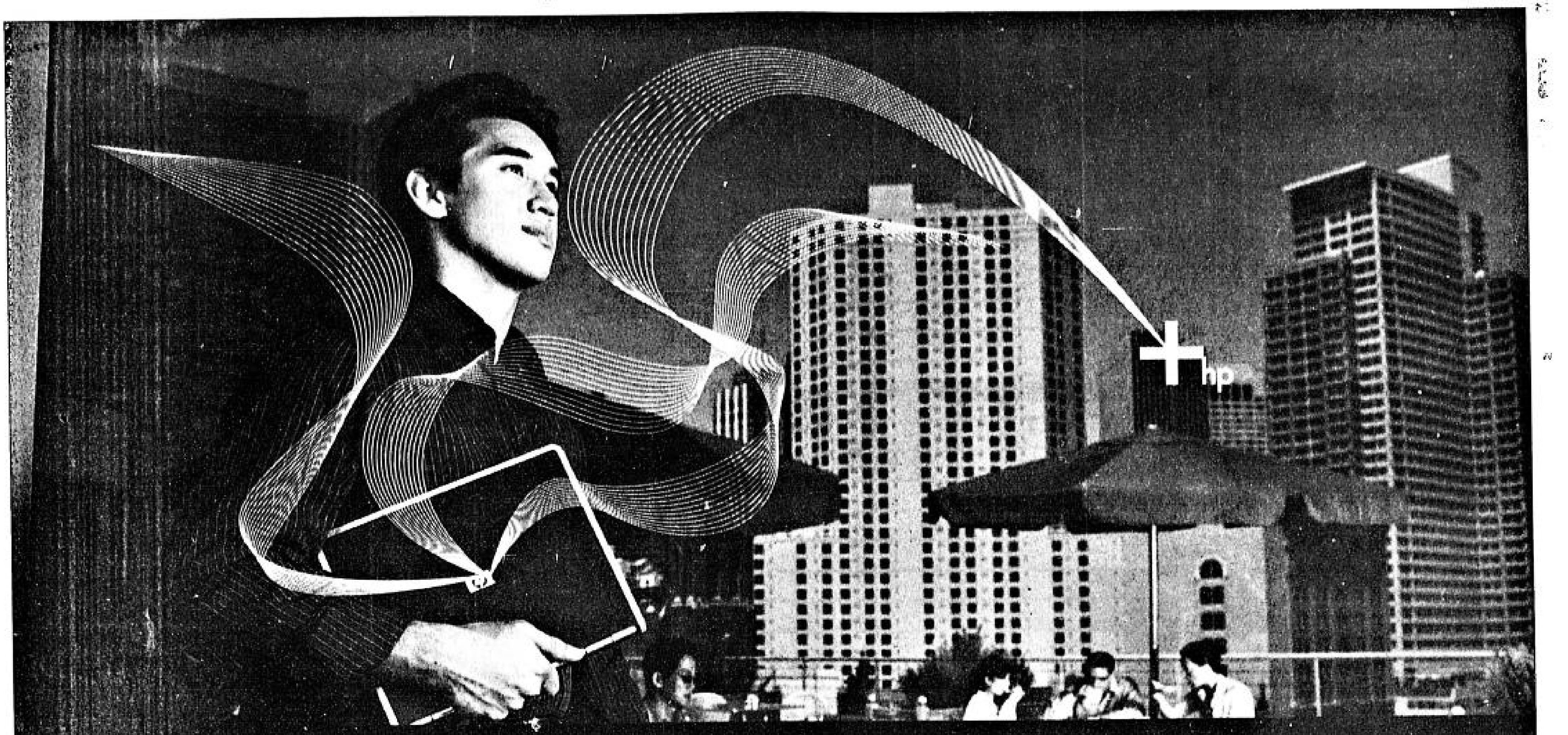

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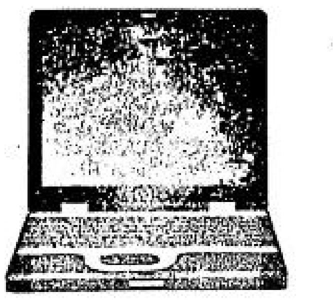

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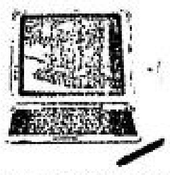

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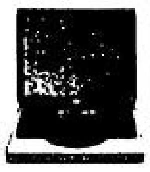

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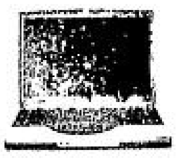

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Bangon says Palace behind Gil candidacy

By Blanche S. Rivera

A LAWYER for the Bangon Pilipinas Movement for National Renewal, the political party of evangelist Bro. Eddie Villanueva, has accused Malacañang of financing the candidacy of businessman Eddie Gil to wreck the former's chances of getting into Malacañang.

Jordan Pizarras, who is defending Gil in his disqualification case, said Malacañang was supporting Gil, an unknown running for president under the Isang Bansa, Isang Diwa party, in order to confuse voters with their first names.

He said this was being done through Gil's senatorial candidate, retired Gen. Ramon Montaño.

Pizarras said Montaño was a known golfing buddy of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo and allegedly the "conduit of funds" from the First Gentleman.

"The only reason he (Gil) has not been disqualified is because Malacañang is financing him and putting pressure on the Commission on Elections. It is a coordinated effort," Pizarras said in a phone interview.

But Manuel Santos, executive vice president of Isang Bansa, Isang Diwa party and Gil's official spokesperson, denied that Montaño and Arroyo were friends.

Santos said Gil's party did not need Malacañang's help to finance its campaign because the group had enough resources.

"Even if they offered to help us, we will not take it because that is exactly what we are fighting—corruption in government."

Gov't, jeepney groups resolve insurance row

THE GOVERNMENT and jeepney operators have agreed to maintain a two-group insurance system for passengers after a three-hour dialogue on Friday.

The Department of Transportation and Communications has ordered the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board to maintain a two-group system in its passenger insurance program as sought by jeepney groups.

"We have agreed that the LTFRB would maintain a two-group system for passenger insurance," said Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza.

The row over passenger insurance was finally resolved during the meeting among officials of the DOTC, LTFRB and transport groups.

At the same meeting, jeepney groups agreed to defer their planned strike until March 16, the deadline set by the transport department for the LTFRB to decide on the P1 interim fare hike sought by the transport operators.

The LTFRB had wanted to open up the passenger insurance program for public utility vehicles after the accreditation of the two insurance firms handling passenger insurance for all PUVs expired in December 2003.

But jeepney groups opposed the LTFRB's plan and sought an injunction from the courts.

The LTFRB requires jeepney operators to have passenger insurance before they can renew their franchise. *Clarissa Batino*

We would like to make a correction on the HP Business Notebook nc4000 ad released in The Philippine Daily Inquirer dated February 23 and March 8, 2004. The HP Business Notebook nx7000 does not have 1) the Integrated Bluetooth function, 2) the 64-bit video graphics with 32MB VRAM and 3) the ATI Mobility Radeon 9600, as stated in the ad. What it has is the ATI Mobility Radeon 7500. Thank You.

hp invent

Cops to halt cars with no plates

By Christian Esguerra

STARTING Wednesday, the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force will apprehend vehicles with no license plates as part of its campaign against kidnap-for-ransom gangs.

Noting that kidnappers often used vehicles with no license tags, Naktf chief Angelo Reyes said the new policy would be implemented initially in Metro Manila and later nationwide.

The directive will be carried out by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, the Traffic Management Group and local police.

"I have given strict instructions to all units to be firm and resolute in their efforts and spare no one, including police and military personnel," said Reyes in a statement.

Vehicles with no license plates but with authorized conduction stickers or vanity plates will be initially spared under the new policy.

But those with expired stickers and vanity plates will be apprehended by March 15. Vanity plates include those that say Alay-Lakad, Kabatas, Mayor and Lawyer, according to Cesar Lacuna, deputy chair of the MMDA.

Laurel recalled

LAUREL

TUESDAY, March 9, is the 113th birth anniversary of Dr. Jose P. Laurel, Philippine president during World War II. Laurel devoted almost 50 years to public service.

From a clerk, he rose to become the youngest secretary of the interior, a senator, Supreme Court justice, secretary of justice, presiding officer of the Constitutional Convention of 1935, author of the Bill of Rights, and President of the second Philippine Republic.

By nature a teacher, Laurel's life and career were premised on nationalism and truth. He authored landmark bills as a senator. His ideals on Filipinism became the basis of educational reforms and legal and judicial pronouncements.

A memorial Mass to be celebrated by Msgr. Emeterio Chavez and a graveside floral offering and program to be led by Mayor Alfredo Corona will be held at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow in Tanauan City in Batangas.

Nippon names 2004 fellows

THE NIPPON Foundation has announced the recipients for 2004 of the Asian Public Intellectuals (API) fellowships.

They are Wilhelm G. Solheim II, Flaudette May V. Datuin and Elizabeth U. Eviota, senior fellows, and Rudyard C. Pesimo, Patrick D. Flores and Rosalie B. Arcala Hall, fellows.

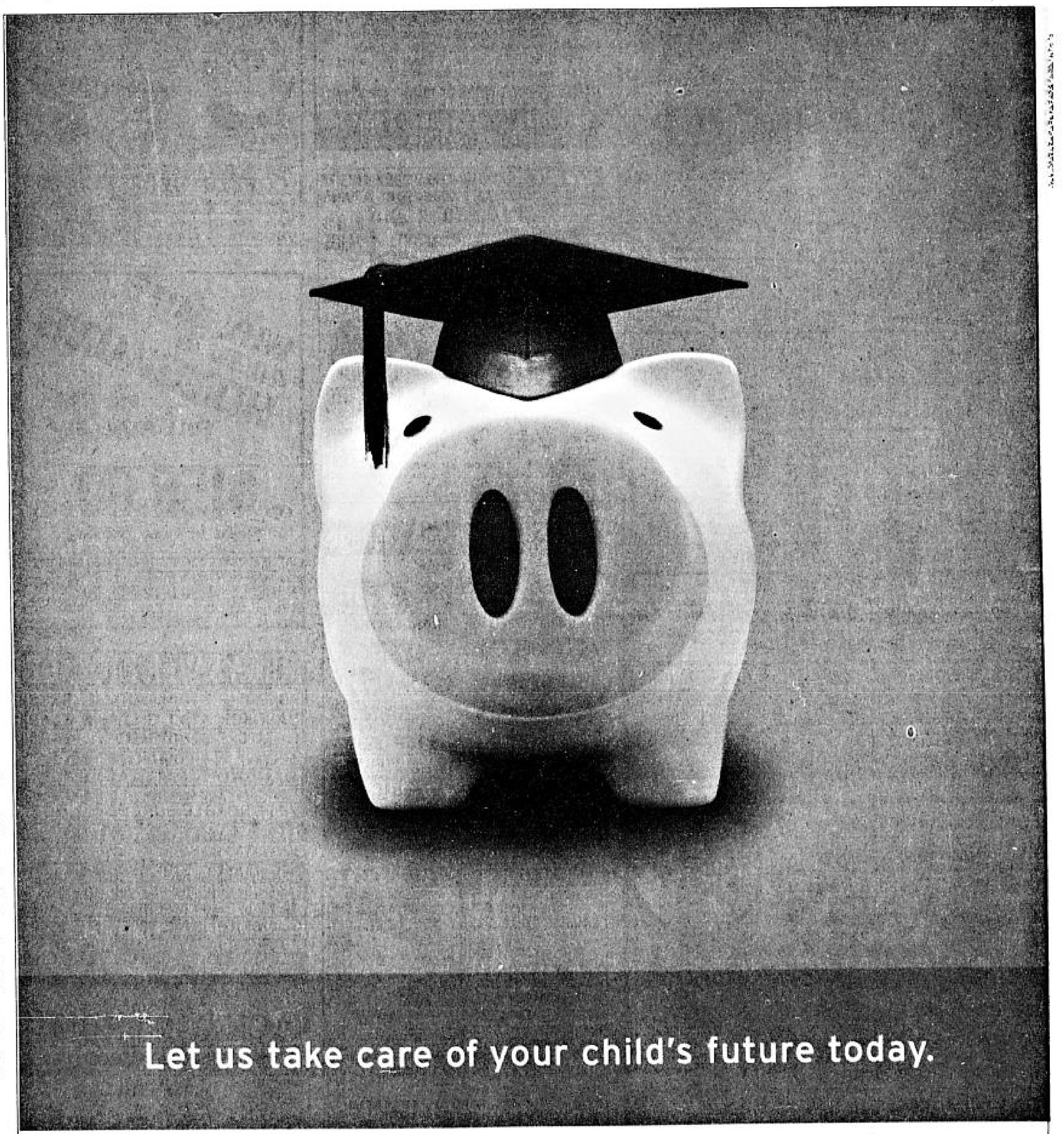
The awarding ceremony is set on March 13 at 5 p.m. at the Social Development Complex at Ateneo University in Quezon City.

The fellowship program is administered by the Ateneo School of Social Sciences, the Nippon Foundation's Philippine partner.

Also offered in Japan, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia, the fellowship seeks to build a pool of individuals who could articulate common concerns in the region and propose creative solutions. These individuals must work in the public sphere—academe, mass media, arts, NGOs, social work, public service and others—with moral authority and a commitment to improving society.

Solheim is faculty consultant in the Archaeological Studies Program of the University of the Philippines. He will complete the final report on the 1959 Gua Sirih archeological site in Sarawak, Malaysia, where the earliest rice in Southeast Asia dating back 4,500 years was discovered.

Datuin, associate professor at the UP Diliman Department of Art Studies, will conduct a study on women artists in the contemporary visual arts and their publics. The study will be conducted in Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.



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RP-US war games end quietly

By Jofelle P. Tesorio
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Balikatan 2004 ended today without hitches or fanfare. Most of the American soldiers returned to their bases in Okinawa and Hawaii, while the Filipino soldiers went back to their original assignments.

Thus also ended the two-week Command Post Exercises and Civic and Humanitarian Assistance in Palawan which was part of the joint military exercises.

The Combined Information Bureau of Balikatan 2004 and the Armed Forces of the Philippines maintained that the war games were not focused on securing the $4.5-million Malampaya gas platform off Palawan against terrorist attacks.

The INQUIRER reported at the start of Balikatan 2004 that Reuters had been shown official documents that said the exercises in Palawan would focus on repulsing attacks on the Camago-Malampaya offshore platform. The facility is jointly operated by Shell Philippines Exploration B.V. and Chevron Texaco. The state-run Philippine National Oil Corp. has a 10-percent stake in the project.

When President Macapagal-Arroyo visited Puerto Princesa City on March 5, she told soldiers, school teachers and local officials that one purpose of the Balikatan was to secure the Malampaya platform, as well as Palawan.

Not the last

Ms Macapagal also said this was not going to be the last Balikatan in Palawan.

"I would like to emphasize the blessings to our country of our strong relationship with the United States. We are number one in East Asia and number four in the world as a beneficiary of the US Armed Forces," the President said.

The Philippines was getting $1.9 million in projects from America but the amount reached $400 million because of the country's favorable US foreign policy. The country also received a Cyclone or Navy boat from the US which cost about $300 million.

This is mutual interest, the President said, not mutual dependency. She turned over the symbolic keys to school principals who were recipients of several civic and engineering projects.

Ms Macapagal arrived at the Western Command here with Brig. Gen. Kenneth J. Glueck of the US Armed Forces and Brig. Gen. Rafael S. Romero. The soldiers had constructed water pumps, repaired school buildings and roads, as well as provided medical and dental assistance to 21 barangays in Puerto Princesa City. The projects cost around P5.2 million.

Prostitution

While there were no untoward incidents involving the 700 American soldiers, prostitution was an issue during their two-week stay in Palawan.

There were reports of women, not their wives or girlfriends, joining some officers in their hotel rooms. According to a Philippine government lawyer, having a good time with sex workers is not an offense unless it's done in a scandalous manner.

Offie Bernardino, Palawan NGO Network executive, said Balikatan had induced the influx of prostitution to the city.

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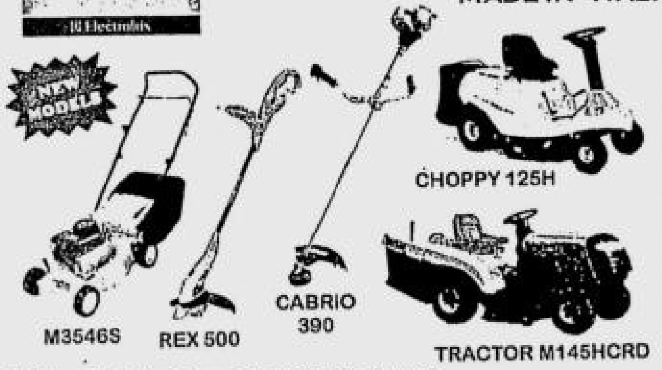

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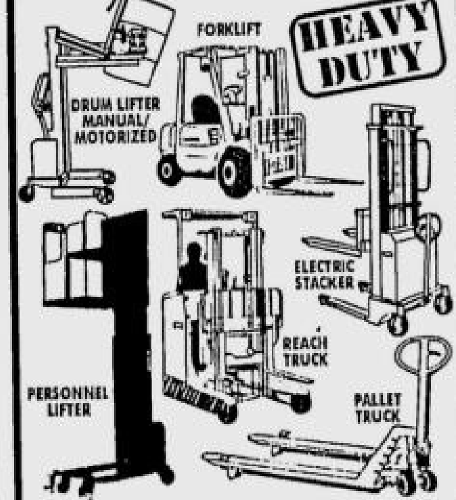

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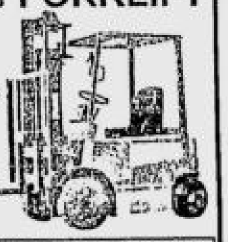

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EU envoys check on RP projects

By Jerome Aning

EUROPEAN ambassadors led by head of delegation of the European Commission Ambassador Jan de Kok left for the Cordillera-Cagayan Valley region for a four-day review of European-funded rural projects.

De Kok was joined by Ambassadors Robert Vornis of the Netherlands, Christiaan Tanghe of Belgium, Herbert Jess of Germany, Renee Veyret of France, Umberto Colesanti of Italy and Annika Markovic of Sweden.

They will be in the region until March 10 to check on major integrated development projects of the Department of Agriculture in partnership with the European Union in Hungduan, Banaue, Asipulo and Kiangan in the Cordilleras, and in Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya.

The envoys will dialogue with local officials, beneficiaries and stakeholders of the projects which are under the Central Cordillera Agricultural Programme (CECAP) and the Economic Self-Reliance Programme—Caraballo and Southern Cordillera Agricultural Development (ERP-CASCADE).

Both programs want to raise local incomes and living standards and strengthen the resource management capabilities of indigenous communities. The programs are set to close in July this year.

CECAP has a budget of 27.5 million Euros, of which 23 million Euros was provided by the European Commission and the rest by the Philippine government.

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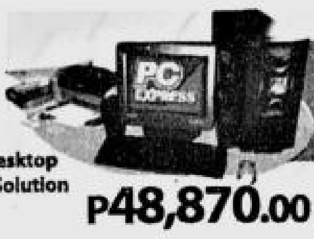

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Ex-Angeles bar girls engage in 'silent advocacy'

From page A1

The lights went out on Angeles' nightclub strip, but only for a little while. Now it is back to business with a vengeance, with foreign club operators slowly lording it over the locals.

Zamboanga to Angeles

Linda's story is fodder for a telenovela.

Born poor in a small town in Zamboanga del Sur, Linda dreamed of the big city. After third year high school, she worked as a dancer in Zamboanga City where, she said, she learned the ropes.

She met and married a soldier, bore three babies, one of whom died. The marriage was doomed from the start, and it was followed by another relationship that also failed.

Linda had heard of Angeles. She packed her bags and headed for the place she called *sikat* (famous). It was 1984 and Linda was 25.

"Everyone dreamed of marrying an American," Linda said. She landed in a club called Y of Ale, owned by a Mister Harris. She later worked in Cock and Bull.

It didn't take long for Linda to know the night club row like the back of her hand. This milieu became home for her and her children.

Linda realized the risks involved, but there was no option in sight. As she said in "Womenjourney," published by the Institute for Social Studies and Action: "*Nandoon palagi ang takot. Hindi talaga ako kumportableng nasa ganoong trabaho. Hindi mo hawak ang buhay mo. Para kang komiks na for rent o tinitinda. Pwedeng kunin ngayon, isasauli kinabukasan. Naranasan ko din na ang tingin sakin ng iba, napakababa. Kahit sa clinic, hindi maganda ang pagtrato ng mga doktor o nurse.*

(The fear was always there. I was never comfortable in that kind of job. You have no control of your life. You are like comics for rent or for sale—borrowed now, returned the next day. I had experienced being looked down on. In the clinic, you're not treated well by the doctors or the nurses.)"

Magdalena

Getting intimate with countless men and living under a roof with a few of them did not lead to a great find that would bring lasting love. True happiness and a peaceful life eluded Linda.

The patriarchal Church was not a source of comfort either. Linda remembers going to a church near Fort Pilar in Zamboanga City to confess to a priest about her abortions. The priest's reaction was instantaneous.

"He stamped his foot and scolded me aloud," Linda recalled. "Then he went out of the confessional to see me face to face. The people around were stunned. I walked away like a Magdalena."

Talking about her other ordeals in life did not bring on the tears. This one did. After that, Linda thought it was better to confess "direct to God."

During those years when her body was for sale, Linda never forgot to call on God. "Every time I went out at night, I always begged for God's mercy that I would be able to get out. I wanted to quit being an entertainer."

Women helping women

When Linda first met the women from Wedpro (Women's Education, Development, Productivity and Research Organization) more than 10 years ago, she was asked: Did she really want to leave her job in the bars?

NELIA Garamay, Linda Lampera and Virgie Gilbure show that they can break free from prostitution.

CERES P. DOYO

The same question was asked when she joined Nagka (Nagkakaisang Kababaihan Collective Group ng Angeles City Inc.).

"I said, yes, I wanted a change in my life. Every night I would think about how I could leave all that. It was difficult but I finally did it. I succeeded."

When the US bases in Angeles and Olongapo were closed and the two cities were devastated by the 1991 volcanic eruption, many women like Linda found themselves unprepared and penniless. The women turned to the women.

Wedpro, which did a bases conversion study at that time, found itself in the midst of women in distress. Funds were not forthcoming. The women in prostitution whose cause was often invoked in bases conversion talks were all but forgotten.

"We had to dig into our own pockets," said Aida Santos, one of the founders of Wedpro.

Then Sen. Wigberto Tañada gave a portion of his Countrywide Development Fund. The national government did not offer a hand.

The first sign of life after the bases and the eruption took the form of portable Coca-Cola kiosks which the soft drinks company provided. Wedpro tried putting up a women's cooperative, but it did not take long for the NGO and Nagka to realize that this was not feasible in that context. The women believed in banding together for a cause (like helping women get out of prostitution) but doing business together didn't seem to work.

The women decided they should each venture into something of their own and not duplicate each other's business. They hit on a good idea.

Life after

A row of about 10 stalls, each one with an area of about 24 square meters, now stands along a street parallel to the infamous Fields Avenue (now Real Street).

Linda, Nagka president, operates a diner. Vice president Nelia Garaman runs a *sari-sari* store, while Virgie Gilbure has a piggery. Nelia and Virgie have their own stories of victimhood and survival to tell.

Several other women have their own income-generating activities. Competition is not a problem.

Linda's Diner used to have a streamer outside that read "Life After Prostitution." Linda now takes a softer approach called "silent advocacy." By their lives and livelihood, the Nagka women show how.

Bar girls come to eat at Linda's diner, which is open 24 hours a day. The men, many of them foreigners, eat there, too.

The food is very cheap. A full meal costs about P50. Linda wants only good, clean fun around her place.

Like many poor women who have gone through life's hard knocks and survived, Linda is naturally the center of an extended family that grows bigger by the day. She takes in relatives and those in distress and is often generous to a fault.

The business has grown, but Linda is still hands-on. She does the marketing. She now has a jeep that she drives herself.

Last year, Linda experienced a burnout that landed her in the hospital. "I was trembling and disoriented, my temperature was 41 degrees. The doctors were surprised I was not dead," she recalled. She had a near-death experience at one point, she claimed.

Stand-out stalls

The humble row of women's stalls naturally stands out on the street with garish lights and loud music, where women in skimpy clothes promenade with their male customers and frolic till dawn. The spot is a coveted one; it could have been a place for several more clubs, if only the Nagka women would choose to go elsewhere. But they are staying put. The place is owned by the city government.

The women do not rest easy. Their place has been called an eyesore. So the women worked to improve its ambiance. It could be a hang-out of pedophiles, they were told. They made sure it was not.

Renewal of yearly permits always brings worries. How long will they be allowed to stay? They have sympathetic friends in the city council and they could invoke the use of public lands in the context of the bases conversion plan, but who knows which way the wind will blow?

In November last year, Linda and the women of Nagka were among the hundreds of women from 33 NGOs who signed the "Manifesto by Filipino Women in Prostitution." The signatories called for the elimination of prostitution and expressed disapproval of its legalization. (Several groups in the women's movement are lobbying for the "decriminalization" of prostitution, but critics of this move say this could mean legalization.)

The women's groups called on the government to study the issue of prostitution more closely and push for an anti-prostitution law that would protect women—both victims and survivors.

Wedpro executive director Marlea Muñez expressed dismay that the former Clark Air Base is again used by US visiting forces en route to military exercises and this means Angeles again plays host for their R&R.

The night club district has indeed risen from the ashes. The landscape has taken on a new look. It is evident from the signage on the establishments that their clientele is more varied now. While it used to be predominantly American, now Australians and Koreans have gained a foothold here and cater to their own.

Angeles is just a couple of hours of travel from Metro Manila. Filipinos and foreign tourists spend fun nights there.

There is no dearth in male customers and female pleasure providers, or else why would there be so many joints—in the hundreds surely—lining the small streets and highway? Not easily visible to the eye are the backdoor and home brothels that have their own habitues.

Against this backdrop, Linda and her friends stand tall and proud, their hands ever busy and ready to reach out. In more ways than one, they have come full circle. They are free.

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'Robot' bares Abu Sayyaf infighting

From page A1

had to move out of jungle camps on Jolo Island because other bandits had voiced fears that their presence might invite a US military assault, according to a report on the interrogation of Abu Sayyaf leader Galib Andang. The Associated Press was shown a copy of the report on Sunday.

Andang, 37, also known as Commander Robot, gave insights into the inner workings of the brutal, al-Qaida-linked group, but evaded questions on his alleged role in terrorist activities and high-profile kidnappings, according to the report.

Andang was captured on Jolo last December, ending a long hunt for one of the country's most wanted men. The United States rewarded a former Abu Sayyaf rebel with nearly $10,000 on Friday for providing information that led to Andang's arrest.

Washington has blacklisted the Abu Sayyaf—notorious for kidnappings and beheading hostages in western Mindanao—as a terrorist group and has offered rewards for information leading to the capture of its top leaders, including Khaddafy Janjalani and four others.

Andang told military interrogators that the 300-strong Abu Sayyaf force on Jolo, a predominantly Muslim island, was led by Jumdail Gumbahali, who uses the name Dr. Abu. Gumbahali's group is reportedly armed with M-16 rifles and M-203 grenade launchers.

2 foreigners

Andang said Janjalani and two other Abu Sayyaf leaders wanted by the United States—Isnilon Hapilon and Abu Sulaiman—came to Jolo with two foreigners who spoke several languages, including English, Indonesian and Japanese, and offered to train local recruits in "demolition" tactics, the report said.

It wasn't clear when the alleged visit occurred.

But Andang claimed the foreigners and Janjalani left Jolo after Gumbahali declined their offer, fearing their presence would ignite fighting with US-trained government troops.

The Jolo-based "ASG (Abu Sayyaf group) members fear that the presence of Janjalani ... will mean US armed forces military operations," similar to what happened on neighboring Basilan two years ago, the report quoted Andang as saying.

Andang was referring to Basilan province, where US troops were deployed to train and arm Filipino troops in a non-combat assistance credited with crippling the main Abu Sayyaf faction led by Janjalani.

Three hostages, including an Indonesian sailor, who escaped from the Abu Sayyaf, told the military last year that they saw two Indonesian men train about 100 local recruits in combat, weapons and explosives starting in December 2002.

It has been alleged that the Abu Sayyaf has links to the regional terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah, which has been blamed for the 2002 Bali bombings.

Factions

Andang also revealed infighting among the bandits, saying the Jolo-based Abu Sayyaf faction did not recognize Janjalani's leadership.

Another Abu Sayyaf commander also wanted by Washington, Hamsiraji Sali, broke off from Janjalani's group over disagreements over ransom money, the military report quoted Andang as saying.

Andang has denied involvement in high-profile kidnappings, including the 2000 abduction of 21 Western tourists and Asian workers from the Sipadan island resort in neighboring Malaysia. The hostages were later freed in exchange for large ransoms, reportedly financed by Libya.

Authorities have charged Andang with organizing the kidnappings and he faces a mandatory death sentence if convicted.

Andang, who was widely seen on TV footage with the Sipadan hostages on Jolo, claimed to have acted as an intermediary who delivered sacks of ransom money from a government negotiator to secure the release of the captives, the report said.

AP

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GHALIB Andang, aka Commander Robot.

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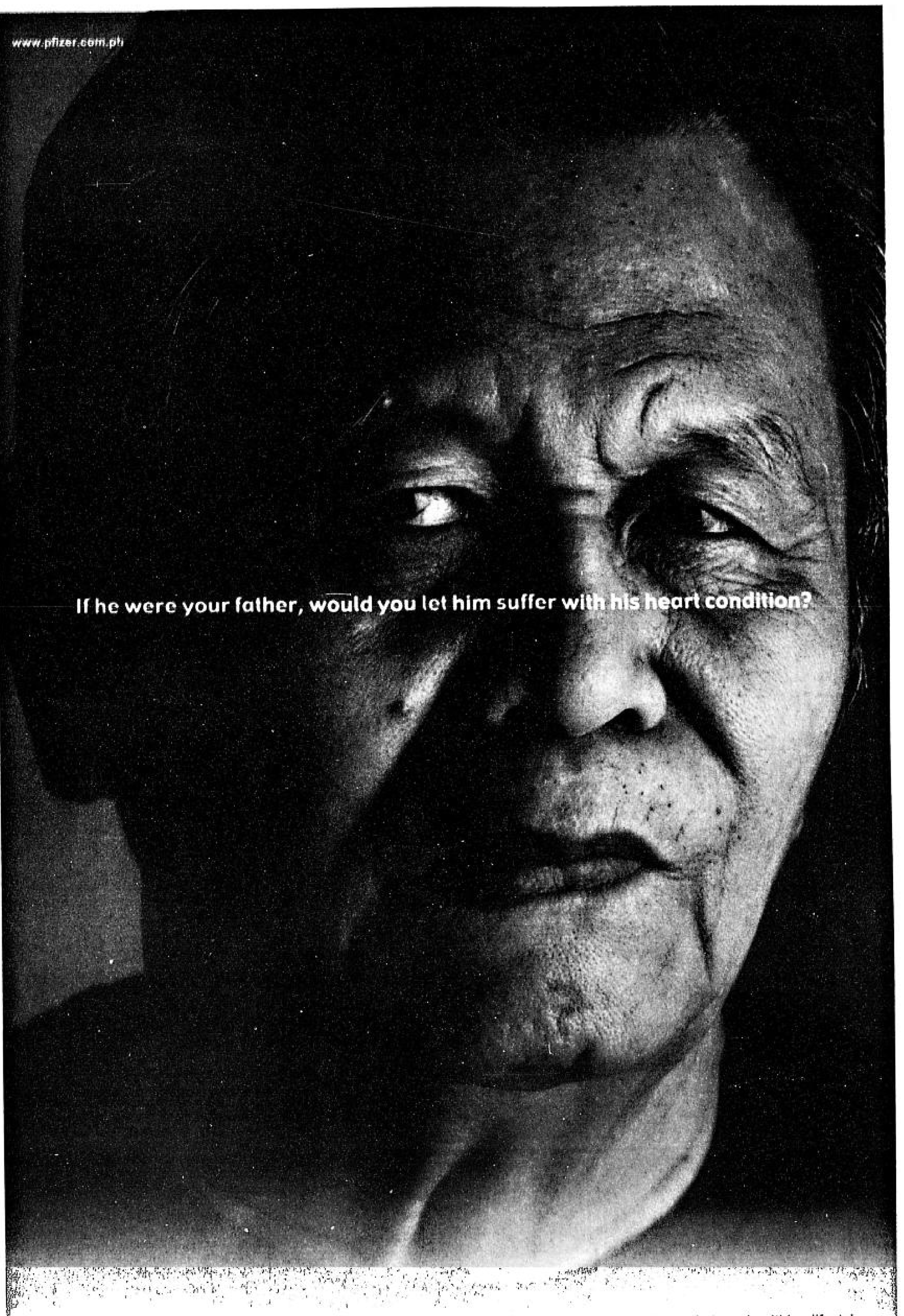
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Editor Luverne B. Gueco

13 Palestinians killed in Israeli raids

BUREIJ REFUGEE CAMP, Gaza Strip—Israeli troops raided two Gaza refugee camps early Sunday, sparking gun battles that killed 13 Palestinians—including an 8-year-old boy—a day after militant groups choreographed an elaborate attack on soldiers at the main Gaza crossing into Israel.

In Sunday's raid, at least 59 Palestinians, among them nine in critical condition, were wounded in the ongoing fighting, said Abdullah Abu Samahadana, governor of central Gaza. Eight of the dead were militants.

The army said it had raided the Bureij refugee camp in a "pinpointed operation against the terrorist infrastructure ... focusing on terrorist cells who frequently fire mortar shells and activate explosive devices against Israeli civilian and military targets."

In intense fighting, Palestinians fired anti-tanks missiles and detonated explosives at forces, the army said. The army confirmed hitting at least one armed Palestinian.

Fighting has intensified in the Gaza Strip in recent weeks—with the army carrying out targeted killings and raids on Palestinian towns while Palestinian militants staged attacks—as each side tries to make a planned Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip look like a victory.

Palestinian Cabinet Minister Saeb Erekat condemned Sunday's raid, calling for a return to negotiations on the US-backed "road map" peace plan.

"At a time when they're speaking about withdrawing from Gaza, they're destroying Gaza," Erekat said.

On Saturday, three main Palestinian militant groups staged an elaborate attack at the Erez Crossing, sending a suicide bomber and militants with assault rifles in vehicles disguised as Israeli army jeeps to attack soldiers guarding the heavily fortified area. The carefully coordinated attack began when a taxi laden with explosives blew up near a military checkpoint.

Four Palestinian assailants and two Palestinian policemen were killed in the attack. No Israelis were hurt.

Before dawn Sunday, Israeli forces, with at least two Apache helicopter gunships hovering overhead, moved slowly down alleys and side streets on the outskirts of the Bureij and Nusseirat refugee camps. Sniper units were stationed on rooftops, witnesses said.

Calls for gunmen to come out and fight the Israelis came over mosque loudspeakers in Bureij and dozens of men from several militant factions poured into the streets. Sounds of intensive gunfire punctuated the air.

Area residents gathered in the emergency room of Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades Hospital in nearby Deir el-Balah, offering assistance to the harried medical staff.

In Nusseirat, soldiers surrounded the homes of two leaders of the Popular Resistance Committees, an umbrella group of members of several militant factions. By midmorning, the army had redeployed in farms around the refugee camp.

Among the dead was an 8-year-old boy and a 15-year-old boy.

Children who can't get to school were in the streets, some throwing stones at the tanks. *AP*

END OF MAKAHIKI

Members of the Keahiakahoe Canoe Club of Kahalu'lu paddle from Kuoloa Beach Park, to Hale Koa Beach on Marine Corp Base Hawaii, March 6, in Kaneohe Bay. The water crossing was part of a traditional Hawaiian closing ceremony marking the end of the Makahiki season. In ancient Hawaiian tradition, the two seasons winter (Makahiki) and the start of Summer (Ku) are regionally celebrated this time of year. REUTERS

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Haiti police hunt looters

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti—Haitian police with rusty shotguns hunted looters in the garbage-strewn alleys of a teeming Port-au-Prince slum on Saturday, seeking to reassert control of an area dominated by armed gangs who back the ousted president.

US and other international troops in Haiti since President Jean-Bertrand Aristide fled to Africa on Sunday want the local police to fight crime and disarm fighters after a monthlong revolt, while they seek to restore order and support the creation of an interim government.

The death toll in the revolt is more than 200.

A council of elders chosen by opposition politicians, members of Aristide's Lavalas movement and international authorities was working to pick a new prime minister on Saturday. Authorities said one could be named within days.

But in a sign of possible turmoil that threatens to mar a political solution, furious Aristide supporters vowed daily protests against a "US occupation" and called for the return of Haiti's first elected president.

"We are going to burn down the palace with the Americans inside," said Jean Enzo, a resident of the slums where Aristide built a power base as a firebrand Roman Catholic priest two decades ago. "We have weapons and we are ready to fight."

Impoverished Aristide supporters burst out in the thousands on Friday to march on the US Embassy and demand his return.

In the fiercely pro-Aristide slum of La Saline—scene of looting and shooting surrounding Aristide's flight—residents watched the police as roosters and hogs meandered in the dirt.

A police commander, a pistol in one hand and hammer in the other, led his men on a raid of flimsy tin-roofed shacks in search of stolen goods. After an hour, the police roared away with a truckload of confiscated televisions, VCRs, office chairs and two crates of champagne.

A gaunt 16-year-old was arrested and thrown into the back of a pickup truck.

There was no sign of the rebels in Port-au-Prince on Saturday as US Marines and French soldiers stood guard or roared across town on machine-gun mounted armored vehicles.

Chile and Canada have also sent troops for the international force, which now numbers about 2,000.

Rebel leader Guy Philippe, a former police chief with a questionable human rights record, wore civilian clothes to hand out humanitarian aid on Friday after saying his men would lay down their arms. *Reuters*

Scientists trapped in Arctic rescued

MOSCOW—Russian scientists were rescued Saturday from a floating Arctic research station where they had nearly been swallowed up by ice floes earlier in the week.

"The rescue operation is a success," Artur Chilingarov, a deputy parliament speaker and former polar explorer himself, who headed the effort, was quoted by Interfax news agency as saying.

The 12 men were unharmed. They were later flown by helicopter to the Norwegian island of Spitzbergen, some 700 km from their drifting station, Russian rescue officials said.

The helicopter landed on Spitzbergen shortly before 1530 GMT, Itar-Tass said, quoting a Russian rescue official. The local Norwegian police head, Olav Tombre, said he had received no request for medical assistance.

The scientists would be home in time to celebrate Monday's International Women's Day—an important holiday in Russia—Chilingarov said.

The fate of the scientists has riveted Russia for days after reports that most of their floating station disappeared in a Hollywood-like scenario.

Most of the installations of Russia's North Pole-32 research station sank overnight Wednesday when the ice below it cracked, rose up swiftly in great walls and eventually disintegrated.

Chilingarov described the rescue effort as taking place under "exceptionally difficult" conditions.

Two dogs which were along on the scientific expedition were also saved, he said.

The North Pole-32 station, set up in April 2003 to study climate change, has traveled some 3,000 km atop the ice floes since then and is currently some 700 km from the North Pole in the Nansen Basin.

Station chief Vladimir Koshelyev earlier told Russian television that more than half of North Pole-32 was swallowed up by ice in only half an hour.

"All of a sudden ... a huge wall of ice appeared that kept growing and growing," he said.

"First it was three-meters high, then five, then seven and finally over 10 ... In the course of a half hour it practically swallowed up 90 percent of the station, leaving only two small houses."

For the three days since the sinking, the researchers had been huddling for shelter in the few remaining structures left on the ice while outside temperatures hovered around minus 30 degrees Celsius (minus 22 degrees Fahrenheit).

Two helicopters, an Mi-8 and the heavy Mi-26 cargo chopper, manned by Russian rescuers flew in at midday Saturday from Spitzbergen to the site.

The Mi-8 landed nearby and picked up the station's crew, while the heavier Mi-26 was due to pick up the station's equipment while hovering above the ice. *AFP*

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US prepares for likely Saddam genocide trial

WASHINGTON—The United States is dispatching a large team of prosecutors and other criminal justice experts to Iraq to prepare for likely genocide trials of Saddam Hussein and his closest associates, a justice official said late Saturday.

The move marks the first specific step by the administration of President George W. Bush toward a practical resolution of the fate of the ousted Iraq leader blamed for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of his own citizens as well as those of neighboring countries.

"We are just literally there as advisers to the Iraqi special tribunals," said the official on condition of anonymity. "We are joining the other nations of the coalition—the Spanish, the British, the Australians, the Polish, and several others, who are also going to be contributing the same types of personnel."

The first members of the US team, which includes about 50 prosecutors, investigators, legal and forensic experts, were scheduled to leave for Baghdad this weekend.

The rest were to join the so-called Regime Crimes Adviser's Office being set up within the Coalition Provisional Authority, the US-led occupation government of Iraq, "in the next few weeks," according to the official.

The group will comprise specialists from most key branches of the Justice Department, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and regional prosecutors' offices.

Charges against Saddam, captured by US troops in December, were likely to include the use of chemical weapons against the Kurdish town Halabja in 1988, when as many as 5,000 people, mostly civilians, were killed, according to legal experts. *AFP*

Martha Stewart was convicted by a web of deceit, says juror

NEW YORK—A deleted phone message and the "stunning" testimony of a close friend clinched the conviction of American millionaire lifestyle guru Martha Stewart, a juror in the celebrity trial said Sunday.

Stewart, 62, was convicted Friday of conspiracy, obstruction of justice and two counts of making false statements to federal investigators—charges all related to a suspicious stock sale.

Each charge carried a maximum sentence of five years in jail.

Given Stewart's high-profile—she is one of the country's most-famous self-made women—the trial took place under intense media scrutiny, but juror Meg Crane told AFP the defendant's celebrity status was never an issue.

"That just wasn't there," said Crane, 64. "But the evidence was."

The jury took just seven hours to find Stewart guilty on all four counts, and then a further seven hours to convict her co-defendant Peter Bocanovic of conspiring with Stewart, perjury, obstruction and making false statements.

"She made a silly mistake, and then they lied and the lies just got worse," Crane said.

The charges against Stewart stemmed from the trade she made a day before ImClone, the biotechnology company then run by her friend Samuel Waksal, announced news that made the share price plunge.

Prosecutors said Stewart received an improper tip that federal regulators would not approve ImClone's anti-cancer drug, Erbitux, sold her shares and then sought to cover up her actions.

Crane said the jury was particularly swayed by Stewart's assistant, Ann Armstrong, who cried on the stand but also told the court that Stewart had erased a phone message from Baconovic that ImClone shares were "going to start trading downward."

Even more damaging was the testimony of Stewart's close friend, Mariana Pasternak, who recalled Stewart telling her, "Isn't it nice to have brokers who tell you those things."

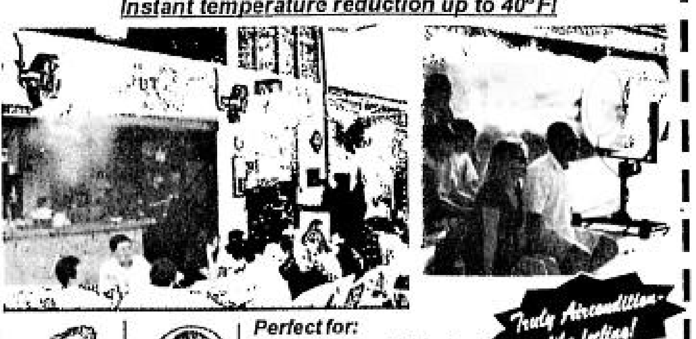
"That was absolutely stunning" Crane said, adding that the fact Stewart was once a broker had weighed against her. "She knew the law, more than a non-broker would."

The jury was "surprised," Crane said, that Stewart's lawyers called only one witness in her defense toward the end of the six-week trial. .

"But then, I don't think there was much they could do. If they can introduce something new at the appeal, I would be very surprised. I don't see how an appeal will work."

Crane said she had "no idea" what the other jury members were thinking before they began deliberating, but it swiftly became clear that there was unanimity on Stewart's guilt. *AFP*

NOT A NATURAL-BORN GIRL
Chen Lili, a 24-year-old transsexual from Yilong county of Sichuan province, China, smiling during an interview with the media Feb. 26. Chen was recently barred from the 2004 Miss Universe beauty contest because she was born a man. AFP



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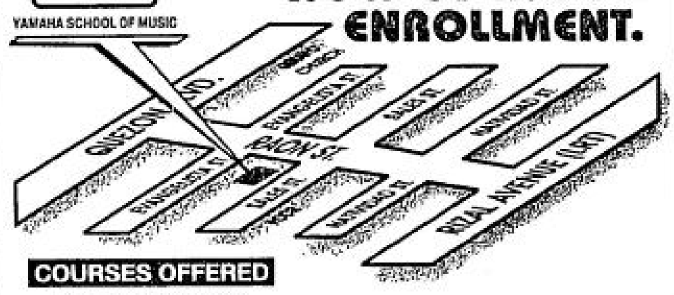

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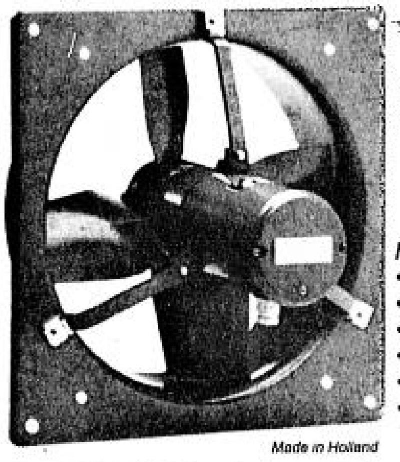

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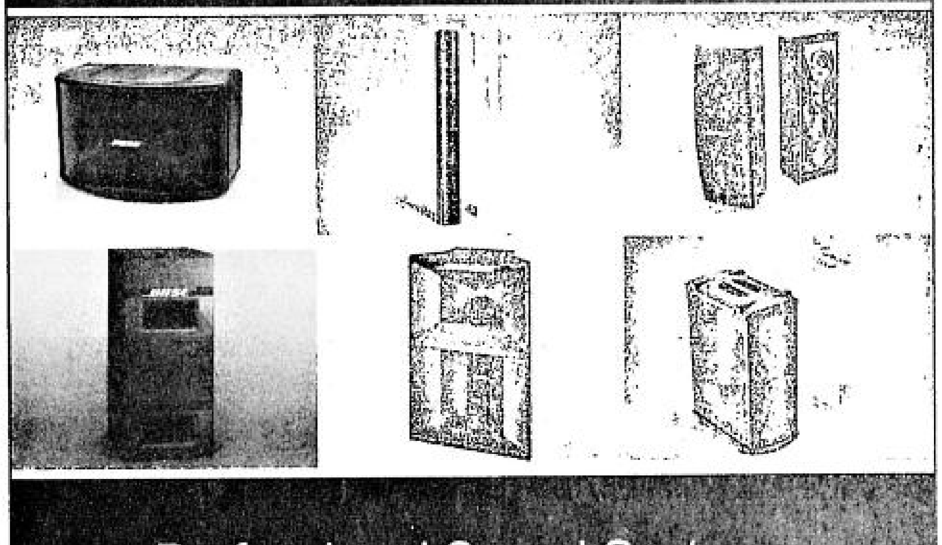

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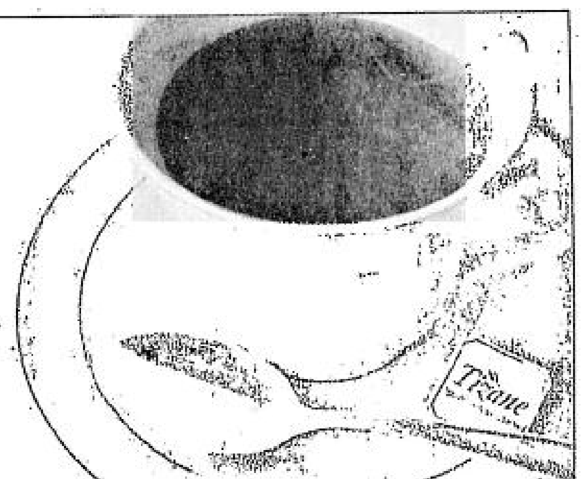

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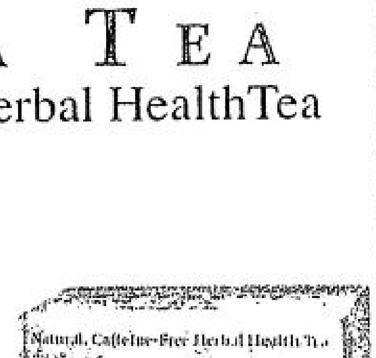


FESTIVAL OF COLORS
An Indian boy smeared with colored powder smiles during the Holi festival in Bombay March 7. Colored powder and water are used during Holi, the festival of colors, which heralds the beginning of spring and is celebrated all over India. REUTERS

US to slap sanctions on Syria soon 'for supporting terrorism'

CRAWFORD, Texas—The United States will soon slap sanctions on Syria, under a 2003 law allowing President George W. Bush to punish the country for alleged support of radical Islamic groups and weapons programs, a US official said Saturday.

"It's coming," said a White House official, speaking on condition of anonymity. The official would not say what kind of sanctions would be imposed or when they might take effect.

In November 2003, the US Congress approved economic and diplomatic sanctions against Syria, which Washington accuses of supporting terrorism. Bush signed the legislation, called the "Syria Accountability Act," into law in late December.

The law demands that Syria end its alleged support for terrorism, halt development of chemical and biological arms and medium and long-range missiles, and withdraw troops it has deployed in Lebanon.

It provides various levels of political and economic levers that can be used against Syria, including reducing the level of diplomatic representation and restricting the movements of Syrian diplomats in the United States.

Washington could also ban the sale of technology meant for civilian use but with military applications, freeze the assets of Syrians in the United States, and bar Syrian aircraft from US air space.

Bush is spending the weekend at his Texas ranch, meeting with Mexican President Vicente Fox.

US Secretary of State Colin Powell said on Feb. 25 that he was disappointed with Syria's Middle East policy, and that relations between Damascus and Washington were "not as I would like them to be."

He urged Damascus to learn from the lessons of Saddam Hussein's ouster and Libya's renunciation of weapons of mass destruction.

The United States has accused Damascus of helping to arm the ousted regime of Saddam Hussein and of turning a blind eye to foreign militants entering Iraq to carry out attacks on the US-led coalition. *AFP*

PROFILE

Clare Short a thorn in Tony Blair's side

LONDON—Former British Cabinet Minister Clare Short, who dropped a bombshell when she claimed Britain spied on UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, is a fiercely independent leftwinger who has become a thorn in Prime Minister Tony Blair's side.

LABOUR MP Short REUTERS

With her deep, almost raucous voice and fiery temper, the 58-year-old politician has earned a maverick reputation, saying out loud what many in the British political establishment think but dare not say.

Born and bred in Birmingham, she was the second of seven children of Irish parents. Her father, a teacher, hailed from the staunchly Republican bastion of Crossmaglen in Northern Ireland.

After earning a political science degree, she decided to enter politics while working as a secretary at the Home Office. She was elected MP in 1983.

A straight talker, she pushed her feminist cause for many years while in the opposition and made a lot of enemies in the tabloid press, particularly The Sun when she campaigned for a ban on the daily's popular Page Three girl showing scantily clad women.

She twice resigned from the Labour "shadow Cabinet" over matters of principle and was even sanctioned for having called for a debate on the legalization of cannabis.

She shocked Westminster by publicly disclosing the existence of her secret son, Toby, 31 years after she had given him up for adoption.

A favorite of nongovernmental organizations, she was named international development secretary by Blair when Labour came to power in 1997.

Her close ties with Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown, Blair's main rival within the Labour Party, enabled her to secure for her ministry a budget four times bigger than that of the Foreign Office.

She campaigned for cutting Third World debt and ending British arms sales to politically unstable countries.

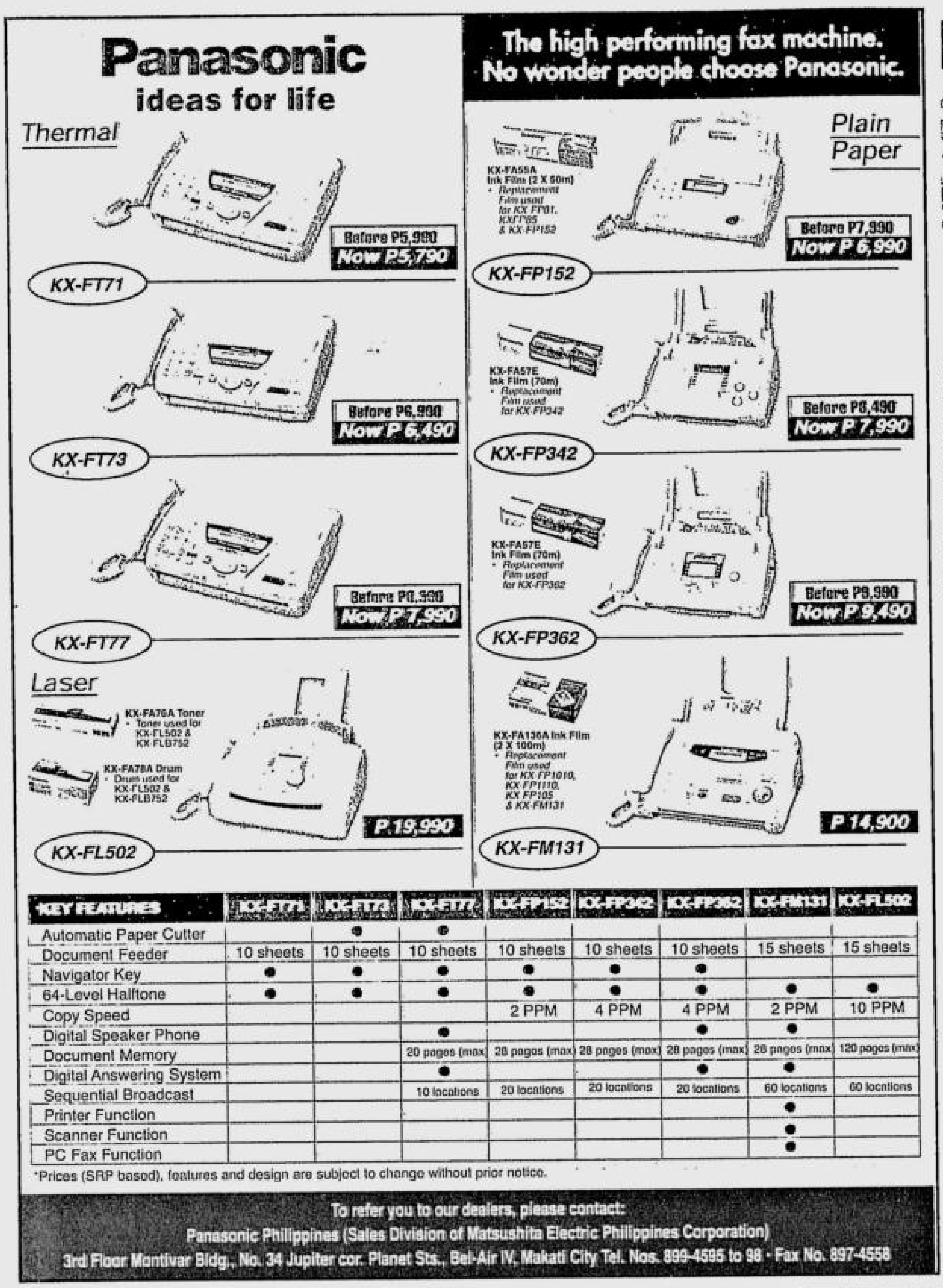
After she resigned last May, the Independent daily wrote: "In office, Ms Short was a thoroughly good thing. During her six years in the job, she managed to make the Department for International Development a model for other rich countries."

"Although still a left-winger in most ways, she risked the ire of ideological fellow-travelers by zealously advocating trade liberalization as the best way of combating poverty. However, as a resigner, she has established a standard for cack-handedness that others will struggle to match," it added.

Along with former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, she became a prominent critic within the Labour Party of the Iraq war, even calling on Blair to resign.

"Tony said to me, 'The French have said they will veto anything,' so I was misled about the French position (on Iraq). We were all misled. Objectively, if things are not true, they are a lie," she told the Independent last July.

She felt that Iraq was never an "immediate threat" to the West and suggested that Blair had perhaps deceived public opinion for a good cause, since no weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq. *AFP*



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MALAYSIA ELECTIONS An elderly man sits in front of a big poster of the logo of opposition Islamic Party (PAS) in Kuala Terengganu March 5, two weeks ahead of the country's general elections. Terengganu, a rural Malay heartland ruled by Islamic fundamentalists, has become a crucial battlefield in forthcoming elections which will shape Malaysian politics. AFP

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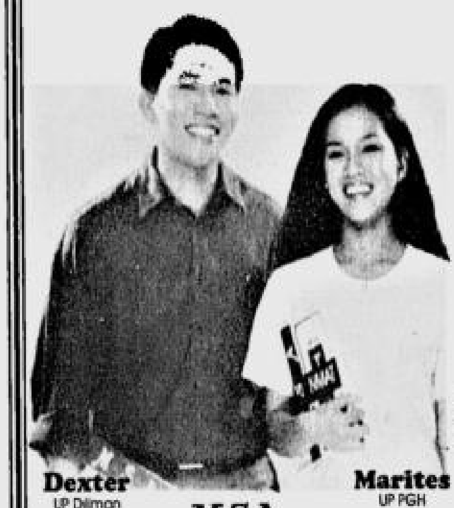

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15 Rwanda genocide suspects still free

NAIROBI—The hunt for about 15 alleged masterminds of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda is set to lose steam and possibly come to a complete halt this year because of a deadline imposed on the UN tribunal investigating and trying the suspects.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), which sits in the northern Tanzanian town of Arusha, has tried 21 people since it was set up in late 1994.

The trials of another 20 suspects are in progress while those of a further 22 have yet to begin.

Some 15 people suspected of planning or organizing the slaughter, an attempt to exterminate Rwanda's Tutsi minority which the current government in Kigali believes claimed a million lives, are still at large.

"It's a huge job to trace all of them," said Alison Des Forges, an expert on the Great Lakes region.

But she was quick to point out that the ICTR already has "80 percent of the most important people ... more than the Holocaust." "The ICTR is trying to find them," tribunal prosecutor Hassan Abubacar Jallow said in January.

The court sleuths' job has been made all the more difficult because many of the fugitives have used their university training, personal wealth or network of friends to make new lives for themselves.

Some of them "benefit from the complicity or indifference" of certain countries, according to Des Forges.

Fourteen ICTR-related arrests have been made over the years in Kenya, more than any other country. Among those picked up in Kenya was former Prime Minister Jean Kambanda.

Other suspects fled to west Africa, taking advantage of the longstanding solidarity among Africa's French-speaking countries.

Ten arrests have been made in Cameroon—where both English and French are official languages—including that of Colonel Bagosora, the alleged mastermind of the genocide, whose trial is currently in progress in Arusha.

Among the most prominent suspects still at large is Felicien Kabuga, a wealthy businessman said to have been the chief financier of a Rwandan radio station that urged Hutus to kill Tutsis and a supplier of arms to the murderous militias.

The US government has offered a $5-million reward for information leading to Kabuga's arrest. *AFP*

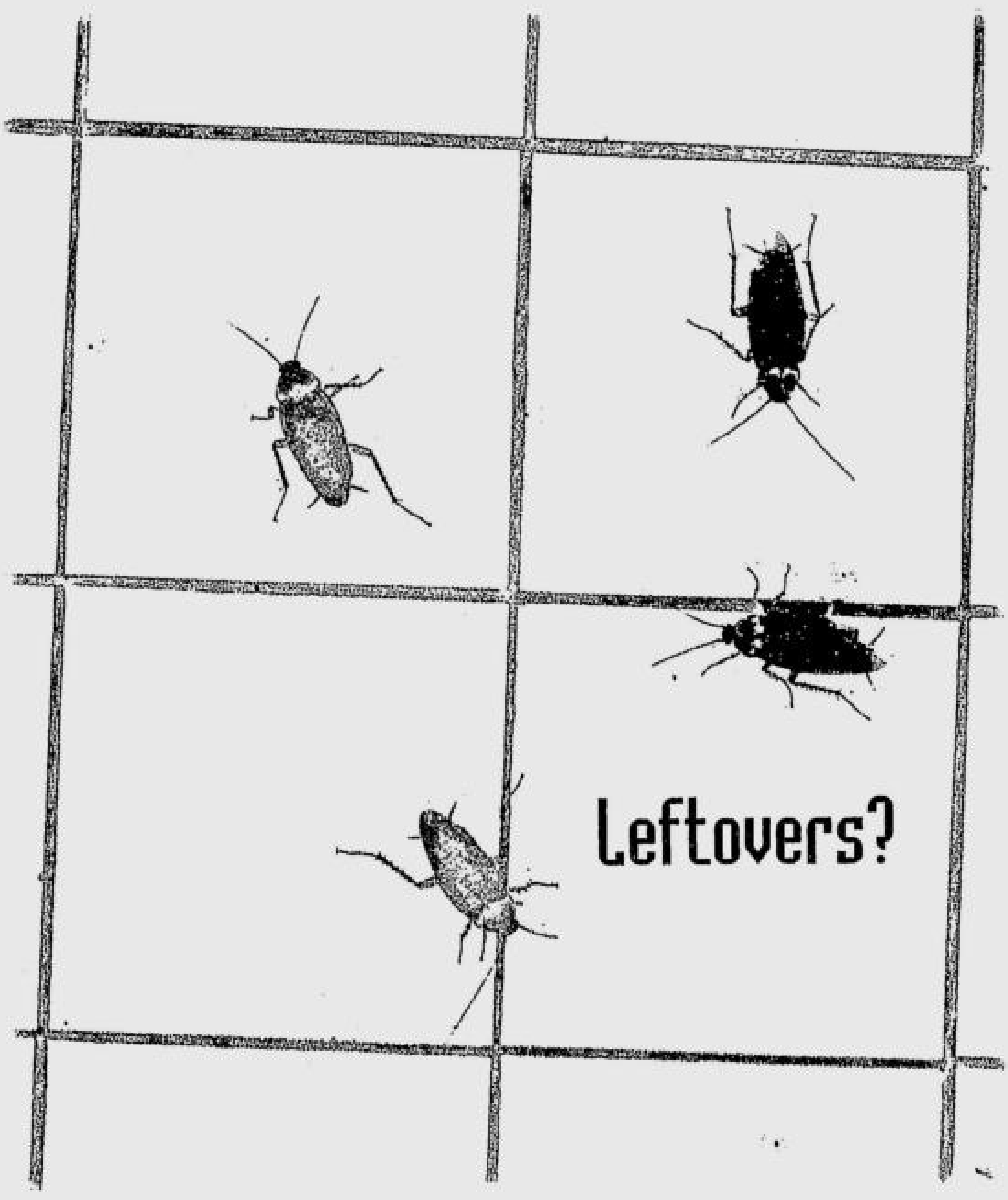
WORLDBRIEFS

9 Taliban killed

KABUL, Afghanistan—US special-operations snipers picked off and killed nine suspected Taliban in Afghan mountains bordering Pakistan, the US military said Saturday—confirming one of the American forces' deadliest engagement in months. The military stayed silent on whether the clash marked the start of a promised spring offensive that has Osama bin Laden as a top target. US commanders over the past two weeks have pledged what they call a hammer-and-anvil approach for the spring thaw into summer, with the crucial support of Pakistan troops on their own side of the Afghan frontier. Under that scenario, the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region where terror suspects are thought to be hiding becomes the iron anvil—against which terror suspects are to be hammered. *AP*

Bird flu in Maryland

WASHINGTON—A case of the bird flu virus was found in a poultry farm in Maryland, the fifth US state to be affected by the disease, state government officials said on Saturday. Maryland, a major poultry producing state, last month banned the sale of live poultry as a precaution against the disease spreading from neighboring Delaware. It was not clear if it was the highly infectious version of the H7 strain, and definitive tests will not be available before Wednesday, said Sue duPont, a department spokesperson. *Reuters*



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Hot spots

IT'S time to update O'Neill's law: All politics is local, especially the politics of election violence. Since Feb. 10, the start of the campaign period for national elective office, more than 20 people have died from poll-related attacks. Without exception, each victim was a local politician, a supporter of a local politician, or an election volunteer on the local level.

EDITORIALS

(The total does not include the 22 who died when a bomb ripped through a Maguindanao gym on Jan. 4, in what the Philippine National Police believes was a politically motivated attack.)

We can only expect the toll to rise dramatically when the campaign period for local elective office begins on March 25.

Almost a hundred years since the first American-style elections were held in the country, the listing of "hot spots"—a euphemism for areas where the likelihood of election-related violence is high—remains a rite of political passage. For the May 10 elections, which may well be the most contentious since the epic contest between Ferdinand Marcos and Corazon Aquino in 1986, the PNP has identified a total of 498 "election areas of concern." The total is "as of" Feb. 29—an ominous phrase, implying more hot spots as the political temperature intensifies.

Indeed, the total does not yet include Sta. Cruz town in Occidental Mindoro, where Rep. Josephine Ramirez-Sato was ambushed on Wednesday. The New People's Army has claimed responsibility for the attack, launched because she refused to pay permit-to-campaign fees and dared to bring in armed escorts into rebel areas.

The authorities have three criteria for determining an area of concern: NPA presence, or intense political rivalry, or a history of violence. That means the Sta. Cruz incident brings the total number of hot spots up to 499.

The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao is a particularly worrying case: one of the most economically depressed areas in the country, with some of the worst social development indicators, it ranks first in one aspect. It has the biggest number of private armed groups in the country, accounting for at least 78 of an estimated nationwide total of 114.

Last month, the chair of the National Movement for Free Elections, Jose Concepcion, proposed that the government form a multi-sectoral task force for each election hot spot, whose task would be to meet with political rivals regularly and thus defuse political tension. (Election violence is a priority concern for Namfrel, which seeks to field some 300,000 volunteers this May. In the 1986 snap election, violence claimed the lives of 11 Namfrel volunteers.)

The Department of Interior and Local Government has put forward a similar program, one which we think is in fact simple enough to work. It is encouraging religious leaders and police officers in each hot spot to broker peace covenants between rival politicians. "Religious leaders will be the main actors," Interior Secretary Joey Lina said, correctly pointing out that the government should assume only a supporting role, lest it be accused of partisanship.

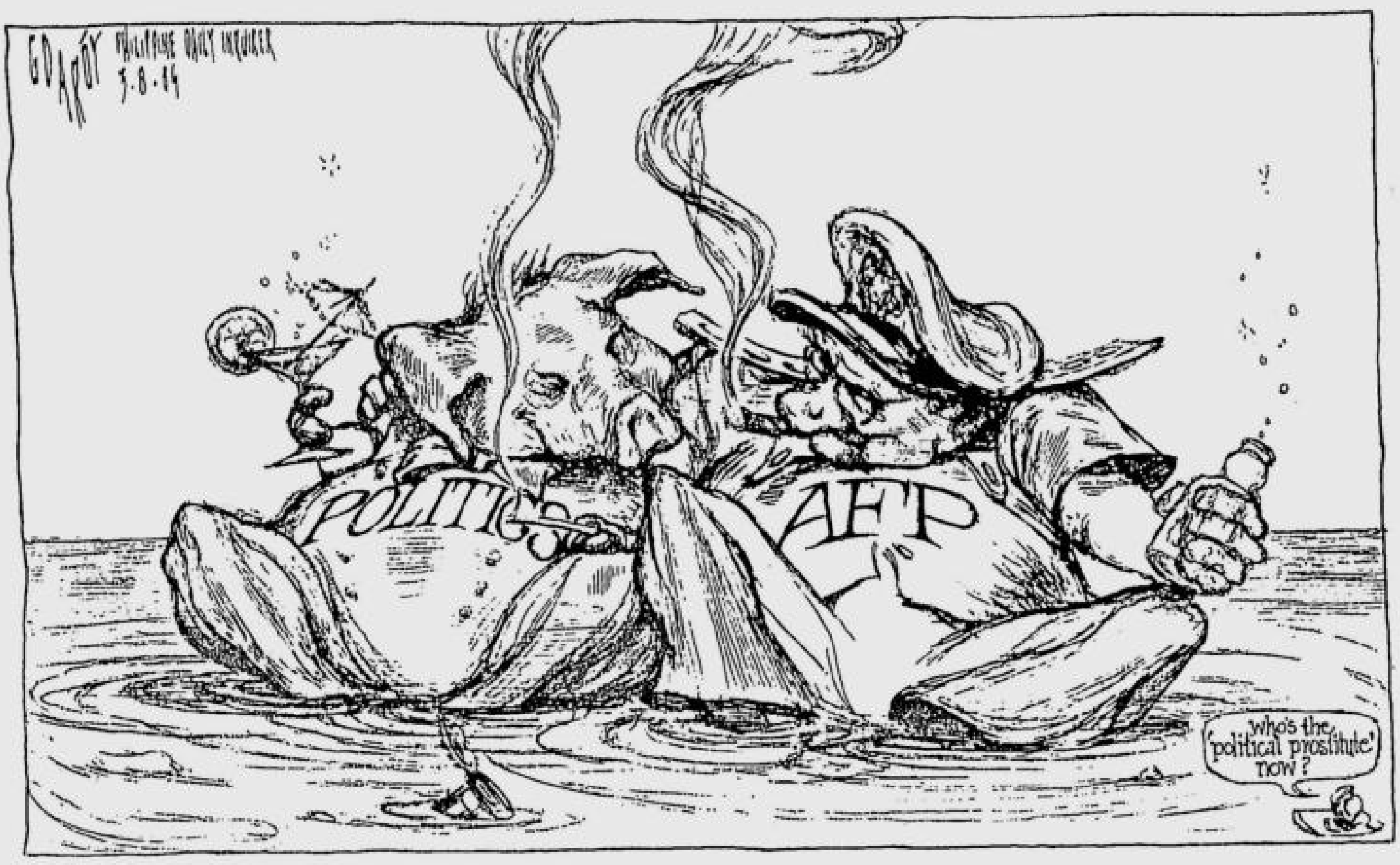
This is not a foolproof plan, and it remains conditional; it will depend on the vigilance of the local leaders. Its success will also depend on the ability of the PNP to send in the cavalry when dialogue fails and violence seems imminent. But the point is, the solution to election violence is like politics itself: it must be necessarily local.

Cool image

IT is unfortunate that the death of the American historian Daniel Boorstin on Feb. 28 went unremarked in the Philippine press. If there was any thinker who could have helped make sense of the circus that is Philippine politics, it was Boorstin.

It was Boorstin, in his 1962 book "The Image," who traced the sad decline of the hero, who once occupied the public imagination, into celebrity-hood. It was Boorstin who defined the celebrity for all time, as a person who is well-known for being well-known. It was Boorstin who created the concept of the "pseudo-event," the staged performance (such as a news conference) that has become a common substitute for real news.

He could not have foreseen that a presidential candidate in a liberal democracy would have turned down a debate in order to present his platform of government through the even more contrived medium of music videos. He could not have foreseen it, but he would have been the first to understand it.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POLITICS
AFP
who's the 'political prostitute' now?

Gov't is doing nothing to avert water crisis

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo opened her after-dinner dialogue with the executives, editors, columnists and reporters of the INQUIRER last Thursday by pulling out a briefing paper and talking about bringing water to hundreds of thousands of families in Metro Manila and environs that had hitherto no water supply.

This seems to be her favorite topic because she talked about the same thing to the officers of Plaridel, the association of veteran journalists, when she inducted them into office in Malacañang two or three weeks ago. During her long peroration at the INQUIRER, however, she did not say where the water supply would come from. Because even without expanding the water distribution system, Metro Manila is already running out of water. In fact, even with the recent heavy rains that raised the water level in the Angat Dam reservoir, the water suppliers have warned consumers to conserve water this summer.

You have read the other things that she said during the dinner in last Saturday's INQUIRER, but none of them was about what the government and the water concessionaires are doing to develop additional sources of water. And yet a water crisis is looming this summer.

I wanted to ask her this but I had already asked several other questions and so many others wanted to ask their own, and when an aide slipped her a piece of paper the President suddenly said "I have to go. Last three questions" and when the fourth question was asked, she refused to entertain anymore, so I never got to ask that question.

Why am I so concerned with water? Who wouldn't be when we are facing a thirsty summer? And besides, year after year, we face a water crisis every summer, El Niño or not. Even when we are swimming in floods during the rainy season and all the dams are overflowing, by summer the stored water is never enough. And I still don't understand why the government refuses to tap additional sources of water to avert the yearly crisis when there are available sources nearby. I have already written several columns about this (and so far no reaction from the government) but I will repeat the important facts to those who tuned in late.

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

We don't have to suffer a water shortage every year because there is a reservoir brimming with water within spitting distance of Metro Manila. This is the Wawa Dam in Montalban which used to be the principal source of water for Manila. This reservoir was abandoned when the Angat Dam was harnessed and there was plenty of water. But now Angat water is insufficient for the needs of Metro Manila and the Bulacan farmers. So why not tap Wawa Dam again? Each single day, millions of gallons of this precious water spill over the dam and flow down the Pasig River to be wasted in Manila Bay, unused by the thirsty people. That is like torturing a person dying of thirst in the desert by pouring water into the desert sands in front of him. Besides, that unused fresh water flowing into the sea is wasted revenue badly needed by a cash-strapped government.

Why don't we use this blessing from nature? It is not as if there is no money for the installation of the pipes from Wawa to nearby La Mesa Dam. A private contractor who was a partner in the construction of the US$650 million Casecnan Dam in Nueva Ecija has offered to install the pipes, at no cost to the government, from Wawa to La Mesa. He made that offer in 1993 at the height of a severe water shortage.

In the 11 years since then, he has made repeated follow-ups to his proposal, but the National Water Resources Board has sat on it all that time. The NWRB has not rejected the offer; neither has it accepted it. It just kept stringing along the contractor as if it is waiting for something. The project studies prepared by well-known and reputable foreign consultants and other documents for the project are now about a foot high but the NWRB still has not made up its mind. That application has been pending for the last 11 years. That is the longest red tape worthy of the Guinness Book of World Records. Yet, reducing red tape was one of the promises of President Macapagal.

Meanwhile, every single day 1.6 million cubic meters of fresh water, enough for the needs of 1.2 million families or an estimated 6 million individuals, is just wasted. This is enough to avert a water shortage that is again facing us this summer. Why is the NWRB allowing this to happen? Isn't this dereliction of duty? And why is the President condoning this negligence? Why doesn't she crack the whip on the NWRB? Why doesn't she cut its overly long red tape?

I had asked the President this water supply question during the Malacañang induction but she seemed evasive. She did not give a clear answer. My question was clear and direct enough: Why doesn't the government allow Wawa Dam to be tapped to avert a water shortage in Metro Manila?

The MWSS is going to tap it, she said. When? No answer.

Sen. Noli de Castro, who was sitting beside her, said, "We visited that. *Marami ngang tubig.* The Rizal folk want to tap it."

How can anybody tap it if you don't lay down supply pipes? And so far, there is no movement in that direction, not by the MWSS or anybody else. Meanwhile, the long hot summer is bearing down on us and with it a water crisis. Why? Hmm, very mysterious.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: Reporter to FPJ: You said you are going to clean the government. How are you going to do that?

FPJ: *Kaya nga puro mga trapo ang ka-ticket ko.*

Grand debate

I'VE several suggestions for the debate among the presidential aspirants. None of it has anything to do with Fernando Poe Jr. joining it. That is his lookout. The Supreme Court has made it possible for him to make his pitch without encumbrance, he has no excuse not to.

My first suggestion is to bring back Mang Pandoy and Evangeline to face the candidates again. Mang Pandoy of course is a household name. He is the jobless odd-job man who appeared in the first presidential debate in 1992 and who swiftly came to represent the Filipino Everyman. Evangeline is the girl from Payatas who scavenges on its mountain of refuse (what a sublime word, "refuse," the very thing the poor of this country accepts!) to help put food on her family's table. They told their stories to the candidates who went on to tell the world how they proposed to change their lives.

The last time I heard of Mang Pandoy was through a brief feature on him on TV a year or so ago. Apparently, he had some help from government at first. He got a job in an office and a loan and grant to build a small shack in a relocation area named Bagong Pagasa, a name redolent of irony. He lost his job as fast as he lost public attention—though it wasn't clear whose fault that was—and the shack he tried to build was left unfinished for lack of money, the few pieces of hollow blocks on the lot lying unused in one corner. Asked whether his life had improved, he said no. There was no rancor in his voice, it almost seemed as though he expected it and would have been surprised if things turned out differently.

Evangeline I never heard of again. I recall that during the 1998 debate, she spoke of her determination to finish school—she was attending elementary school in-between scavenging and doing chores—to pluck her family from its plight. It would be good to know how she has fared, whether life has been kind or cruel to her. And it would be good to know how the presidential candidates propose to convince her and Mang Pandoy things would be different this time around.

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

My second suggestion is a current Filipino Everyman. My vote goes to Elmer Jacinto. Jacinto is not unlike Mang Pandoy and Evangeline in origins. He grew up in Lamitan, Basilan, reading by kerosene lamp and attending school to the intermittent sound of gunfire. But very unlike Mang Pandoy and Evangeline, Jacinto went on not just to finish school but to finish medical school and top the board exams. But after showing he could be one of the best doctors this country has known, he has expressed a desire to work as a nurse in a New York hospital. He has already applied for it and been accepted to it. "While it pains me to do this," he says, "I am looking forward to working abroad and don't want to let the opportunity pass."

Jacinto encapsulates perfectly the country's fundamental question today. Namely, why should anyone want to stay in it? I wrote a column on this last December after a doctor from St. Luke's told me many of his colleagues—these weren't neophytes, these were doctors who had years behind them—were contemplating leaving the country for Canada and working there as caregivers. I thought then he was exaggerating. I don't now.

Jacinto moreover exemplifies not just the dilemma of professionals who have to live in a country that is unkind to professionals but of the poor in this country who have languished from horrendous neglect by the national government and of folk in Muslim Mindanao in particular who have suffered from horrendous attention by the military. I suggest Jacinto be haled before the presidential candidates not so he could justify why he has to leave but so the candidates could justify why he shouldn't. Anyone who can persuade him to stay—and not by the simple expedient of bribing him, which is how things get done in this country—gets my vote.

My last suggestion is to take seriously Tito Sotto's proposal to hold the debate in an impoverished community. That was his answer to the challenge hurled by FPJ's rivals that he face them in a debate. Sotto countered that, fine, the candidates should debate, but they should do so in Payatas. Doubtless meant to be facetious and a way out for his *manok*, I don't know why we shouldn't embrace his proposal.

The venue need not necessarily be Payatas, it need only be a place known for public discourse. I don't know that Plaza Miranda still qualifies for it, it used to be the Hyde Park of this country. "Take it to Plaza Miranda" was advice for people who had something to say. If you can defend it there, you can defend it anywhere. Maybe Plaza Mrianda's old reputation can still be revived. But the idea is to bring the candidates to the people and not the people to the candidates. The idea is to bring Mohammad to the mountain and not the mountain to Mohammad.

A debate about the country's future is not meant to showcase the ability of the candidates to speak English, to spout economic gibberish, to parade the letters after their names. It is meant to show the ability of the candidates to grasp the situation of the country, to talk to the people, to see the people. The reason presidential debates have never grabbed the imagination of the public is that they are not addressed to the poor, who are most of us, even when they feature a Mang Pandoy or Evangeline. They depict the poor only as beneficiaries, victims, subjects, objects, passive recipients of the generosity and wisdom of the future resident of Malacañang.

They do not make for grand debates, they make only for a grand, well, the graphic Tagalog phrase is "*pataasan ng ihi.*" An exercise on who pisses the highest and farthest. Those are my suggestions on how not to make them so.

Bandwagon?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

MANILA Times publisher Dante Ang may have a point when he argued in his column that this early the race for the May elections may be over, except for the counting. At the rate politicians from various parties are climbing aboard the Macapagal express, a bandwagon seems to be emerging. For instance, in Palawan, former LDP and now LP Rep. Abraham Mitra recently deserted presidential candidate Panfilo Lacson and during President Macapagal-Arroyo's recent visit to the province, he came out openly for her. This means that all its big guns, Rep. Vicente Sandoval, Gov. Joel Reyes, Puerto Princesa Mayor Edward Hagedorn and Mitra are now with GMA.

* * *

The opposition speaks of future realignments that could affect the political landscape. One such shift being closely monitored is a possible unity between Fernando Poe Jr. and Lacson as they go into a make-or-break talk next month. The unity prospect for them doesn't look too hopeful at the moment, but if the opposition wants to capture Malacañang those two have to come to some agreement. I suspect they ultimately will.

There are also talks about a Lacson-Raul Roco unity, although Lacson wants Roco to give way to him, which is ridiculous, considering that Roco's faring much better. A fusion between them seems far-fetched as they are ideologically poles apart. On the other hand, I note that Roco has recently been hitting hard at the inadequacies of FPJ, which has led to speculation that a GMA-Roco alignment could be in the works. In fact, there are those who appeal to Roco to do a Doy Laurel for the country's sake.

* * *

Some analysts opine that the perceptible shift to the GMA camp is caused by the fear of a possible disastrous FPJ presidency, especially in the A, B and C classes, where there is a perceptible shift from the camp of Roco to GMA. A text message passed on by INQUIRER columnist Aida Sevilla-Mendoza aptly put it, "I am a Filipino with a high self-esteem and I won't allow a high school dropout to become my president." But one can sense this shift to GMA's camp even among the D and E classes from where FPJ draws his strength and which command about 78 percent of the total votes. I was in Divisoria and in Manaoag recently and some vendors told me they don't want FPJ as they realize he's only good for the movies.

* * *

What's causing the downward slide of FPJ is his own poor political performance, such as his refusal to join the debates and elucidate on his ideas of governance, preferring to mouth his movie lines. In contrast, GMA has carried her campaign among the poorer classes, as she told us in a recent visit to the INQUIRER, through the introduction of three programs recently. These are, the provision of hybrid rice seedlings called "Gloria rice," which should double the rice harvest per hectare from 500,000 metric tons to 1 million MT; a scholarship program to provide loans to third, fourth and fifth year college students, payable two years after graduation; and a "*patubig*" program for Metro Manila's 160,000 waterless families. I asked GMA about criticisms that the scholarship was launched to target the 18-year-old voters. She asserted that the reason it's being pushed only now is that it's only at the end of 2003 that revenue collections had improved, so there's funding for this program.

* * *

Speaker Jose de Venecia told media recently that one big factor pushing GMA is that in a number of places, local Lakas candidates may be fighting each other for a given post, but the good thing is that all these warring locals support GMA. This seems to be true in Leyte where a battle royale is shaping up for the governorship between former Rep. Sergio Apostol and Jericho Loreto Petilla, the son of three-term Gov. Remedios "Matin" Petilla and former Gov. Leopoldo Petilla. GMA may have to do a delicate balancing act in Leyte when she goes there around March 19.

Apostol, in his mid-70s, who achieved fame as a lead prosecutor in the Erap impeachment case, and later became chair and CEO of PNOC-EDC, is running under Lakas-CMD while Jericho, in his early 40s, is Lakas-NPC. Jericho is a management engineering graduate of the Ateneo who began teaching computer science there when he was only 20 and set up its computer system; now a computer specialist, he built up a multinational computer data processing firm in 1987, together with a British guy from New York, and today it has over 2,000 employees and clientele from seven countries.

* * *

The Petillas had a difficult time convincing their brilliant technocrat son to continue the family political tradition in Leyte, but the battle for its governorship is not just between Apostol and young Petilla. It's between two old power blocs in Leyte that have been at odds more often than as allies in various elections. On the one hand, there's Serging Apostol and wife Trinidad, the incumbent second district representative; against them is outgoing Governor Petilla, whose strength can be gauged by the fact that she's running for the first district of Congress under Lakas unopposed, supported by six of the seven mayors there. Rep. Ted Failon decided not to run again and his 2001 opponent, former Rep. Alfredo Romualdez, also backed out. Serving as the Petillas' campaign manager is ex Gov. Leopoldo Petilla.

* * *

There's speculation that Matin might jump to the FPJ camp after he paid a courtesy call on her during his recent Leyte sortie. But Matin vehemently denies this, stressing that she's definitely with GMA and expects to deliver the province to her. Instead, the Petilla camp notes that Apostol's running mate, Arturo Arcal Astorga, is the LDP provincial chair, while his candidate for the Fifth District is former Rep. Berting Loreto, Matin's own brother but also the LDP regional chair. Both LDP leaders are campaigning for FPJ, hence, Petilla followers ask, isn't it natural that Apostol would be for FPJ, too?

Greening the market

COMMENTARY

Roberto C. Yap, S.J.
Institute on Church and Social Issues

ENVIRONMENTALISM can be good business. Business can be good for the environment. These intriguing ideas generated much interest and even excitement at a forum on the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) held at the Development Bank of the Philippines last Feb. 5 to 6.

The forum, attended mostly by representatives from the private sector, both business and financial, was sponsored by the DBP, Joaquin Cunanan & Co. and Klima—Climate Change Center of the Ateneo de Manila. The forum examined the opportunities and risks of the emerging carbon market.

The emergence of a global carbon market is receiving a major boost as the international community gears up for the enforcement of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Kyoto aims to reduce the emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases whose excess amounts hold in too much heat in the atmosphere and cause global warming.

Industrialized countries (e.g. Japan, Canada, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Germany) which ratify Kyoto bind themselves to carbon emission reduction targets. The CDM allows private companies and governments in these countries to invest in emission-reduction projects in developing countries in order to receive carbon credits which they may count against their emission targets.

In hosting CDM projects, developing countries (like the Philippines) will earn financial revenues by selling carbon credits generated by these projects. Moreover, the host country will also benefit from the sustainable development benefits of these clean and green projects. At the forum, several potential projects were presented.

The Northwind Power Development Corp. presented its 25 MW Wind Power Project at Bangui Bay, Ilocos Norte. This will most likely be the first wind energy project in the country. The power generated by Northwind will be fed into the grid to service the Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative. The power generated by wind energy will displace other power which is produced partly by burning fossil fuel (e.g. coal) and which emits carbon dioxide. Hence, this wind power project will reduce carbon emissions and generate carbon credits which can be sold to industrialized countries through the CDM.

Another potential project presented was the transformation of rice husks into energy. Rice husks are a biomass waste product of the milling process. As rice husks decompose, methane, a greenhouse gas, is emitted. Methane is a potent greenhouse gas because it has 21 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide. A CDM-eligible project could capture the methane escaping from decomposing rice husks and utilize this gas to generate heat and power needed by rice mills. This project could gain carbon credits in two ways: first, by capturing the fugitive methane emissions and second, by lessening the demand for power generated by fossil fuel burning.

Solid waste management is another area with enormous prospects for reducing greenhouse gases. Decaying waste in our dumps generate methane, which is why our dumps are fire hazards as this gas is combustible. A CDM project could capture the methane and transform the gas into energy. Such a project will generate carbon credits which could provide the additional revenue needed to make sanitary landfills economically viable.

Efficient lighting is another area which would be CDM-eligible. The lighting systems in the office buildings in Makati and in Ortigas could be made more climate-friendly. These systems could be retrofitted to use compact fluorescent lamps which will consume less electricity and thus lower carbon emissions.

Forestry projects were also presented as possible CDM projects. By photosynthesis, growing trees absorb carbon dioxide. The biomass of a tree is about 50 percent carbon by weight. By fixing carbon, forests play a major role in mitigating carbon emissions. Reforestation projects will store or sequester carbon. Through CDM, such reforestation projects will earn revenues from the carbon sequestered. This carbon revenue could provide a much needed incentive to the anemic reforestation efforts in the Philippines.

The forum did not only have presentations of prospective CDM projects, there were also discussions of the funding sources which could be tapped for these projects. Of particular interest was the emergence of carbon funds which would be dedicated to the development of carbon reduction projects and to the purchase of carbon credits.

The effort to combat global warming is creating a new market commodity. Carbon credits can be generated by CDM projects. Carbon credits can be bought and sold internationally. Carbon investment facilities are being set up to fund projects which reduce carbon emissions and to purchase carbon credits. All these market mechanisms give the business and financial sectors incentives to participate in the endeavors to reduce carbon emissions and control climate change.

The forum emphasized that the private sector will be the primary stakeholder in the operations of the CDM. Under the CDM, the private sector has immense incentives to develop projects which reduce emissions and deliver sustainable development benefits. Bizarre as it may seem to environmentalists, business can work for a better environment.

To be a woman

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

THAT was the title of an editorial the late Teodoro M. Locsin Sr. wrote, when he revived the Philippines Free Press in time for the snap election of 1986. In the editorial, he wrote, "There has never been anything like it in Philippine history: a woman telling the machos of business and industry to do what she is doing, to stand up to the injustices against which they have been content merely to complain…And one with any sense of morality, of human right and dignity, can only recoil from government by, for, and of one man clearly determined to maintain his rule at whatever cost to the nation. But it took a woman to do what a man, or men, should have been doing: Fight! Being a man was sadly inadequate. One had to be something else. Be a woman—like her! Like Cory."

Of course critics of President Macapagal-Arroyo will say that she is acting less like a woman and more like a man, based on the above; and yet aside from the very few who oppose her on principle, that is, because of her policies, I suspect there is a greater number who don't like her simply because she is a woman.

While Cory Aquino was (and is) matronly, the President is more like a school marm: you know, the strict and grim type that tends to be cold, domineering, demanding, and not at all charming. The type that demands performance and doesn't bother to pat you on the back. Nothing could be a more unpleasant combination for the Filipino male. Cory Aquino, at least, was unfailingly polite, bringing out the gallantry in her peers, even among her enemies, though behind her back they sneered at her. The President, on the other hand, derives satisfaction from doing her work and expects the same of other people: nothing could be more irritating to the ordinary man. In fact, I've heard some people muse that the reason the President is fiercely opposed by some people is that she has an emasculating effect on those people. They are simply discombobulated by the fact that the President is young enough to be fashionable, to be feminine when the only thing most men could tolerate in a woman holding a high position is to be motherly, or better still, grandmotherly. Cory Aquino was a widow and grandmotherly; the President is young enough to care about what she wears; she dances; she even talks about sex, and not even in the clinical manner reserved for those for whom sex is but a memory. In other words her very femininity is a threat.

She is also a great organizer, a characteristic most people ignore, but which is her greatest asset as an executive. Cory Aquino, on the other hand, was a great communicator; an inspirer. Despite lacking a direct mandate from the people, she has managed to show that when it counts, at least, government can be mobilized, not by rousing them to action through speeches, but simply by knowing how to wield the levers of power. She is studious, and thorough, and thoroughness is not known as a male virtue.

I once heard someone say that our country would be a lot better off—indeed, the entire planet would be better off—if our country and every country were run by women. Things would be more efficient, more sensible, more compassionate. Such a view, of course, ignores the strange kind of machismo that can inflict the leadership of strong women such as the empresses Catherine the Great of Russia and Maria Theresa of Austria; or of more modern leaders such as Indira Gandhi who attempted a dictatorship in India, and Golda Meir of Israel. But there is something to be said for a yearning for the matriarchal organization of society that seems the original kind of government for human society. Men start wars; women find ways to lessen its hardships, and nurture the young, the weak, and wounded. Men kill for power; women achieve power in other ways. The saying men are from Mars, and women from Venus, makes a lot of sense if you look at the mythological origins of the names of the planets: the God of War, and the Goddess of Love.

We continue to think of leadership in terms of Mars riding his chariot of war (and recall, in Greek and Roman mythology, Ares/Mars was not one of the brighter gods); we think of leadership in women as something sinister, exercised through seduction, in other words, through corruption. And yet the great so-called macho leaders of our past were seducers, after all, courting the populace, plying them with honeyed words and fine gestures: Joseph Estrada understood the feminine aspect of the electorate, and Fernando Poe Jr. does not.

It is the tradition of viewing the electorate in feminine terms—and I suspect, the electorate, whatever its composition, viewing itself as feminine, too—that makes things difficult for women leaders. I have heard a woman say that the President is unpopular among women because women resent a strong member of their sex; women can be competitive, too. Taken to a broader level, a feminine-minded electorate might resent a woman leader with a strong personality in the same, negative, way.

When the Philippine Commission offered to grant a pension to the mother of Jose Rizal, she tartly replied, "if the government has so much money to spend, let it lower taxes." Could it be that we only want women in our national life to serve as our conscience, but that we continue to believe that their proper place is at home—to be the mothers and nurturers of heroes, and not heroes themselves? To inspire leaders, but not to lead? Simply because they happen to be women!

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Inaccurate report on sea tragedy

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

IT is difficult to report on events that have claimed human lives or injured many others. In the race to meet editorial deadlines, important facts are sometimes overlooked or reported out of context.

An item in the INQUIRER's report on the fire that hit SuperFerry 14 of the Aboitiz Transport System Corp. last week illustrates the above point. Understandably, it drew a howl of protest from the affected parties.

To refresh the readers' memory, on Feb. 28, the newspaper's front page carried a dramatic picture of the burning ship as rescue teams tried to contain the blaze and save its passengers. An inset photo showed a young woman cradling a baby who survived the tragedy.

The banner for that day was "112 missing in ferry fire." Below this headline was a two-decked subhead: "766 rescued, 1 dead in 'inferno' at sea; SuperFerry 14 had history of fires, trouble."

The latter sub-head highlighted the portion of the news which read: "Virtusio [referring to Aboitiz's spokesperson Gina Virtusio] also confirmed that SuperFerry 14 had caught fire three times in the past, but could only remember that one of the incidents had taken place at the Cebu Shipyard." This news item came out on the front page.

Aboitiz vehemently denied the statements that were attributed to its spokesperson. It said the fire was the first for SuperFerry 14 and that Virtusio's statement about three fire incidents in the past referred to the entire ship complement of the company.

Misheard

Virtusio also stressed that if she really said those words, the radio and TV journalists who attended the press conference would have underscored that "fact" in their broadcasts. As it is, only the INQUIRER published the news about the alleged previous fire accidents involving the ill-fated ship.

Although I had no reason to doubt the truth about the complaint, I nonetheless checked if it matched with the INQUIRER's own listing of the fires that have hit ships in the country in recent years. The Feb. 28 issue carried a sidebar that enumerated those fire incidents, as compiled by the newspaper's research staff. SuperFerry 14's name was not on the list.

When asked to explain her side, the reporter said she thought Virtusio was referring to SuperFerry 14 when the latter said something about fire incidents that happened "three times in the past but could only remember the Cebu Shipyard incident."

The reporter stated she was not aware that Virtusio's remarks were in relation to the entire Aboitiz fleet and not to SuperFerry 14 alone. She emphasized she did not deliberately intend to malign Aboitiz or misinform the readers about the fire-struck ship.

Since the newspaper's attention had been called to the error, Aboitiz expected that the following day's issue would straighten out things in a manner commensurate to the presentation of the inaccurate news report, that is, on the front page and with the same prominence as the sub-head in question.

Correction

Unfortunately, the correction did not happen the way Aboitiz felt it should be made. Instead of owning up to the mistake, the follow-up news gave the impression that the inaccuracy was traceable to Aboitiz's spokesperson, not to the reporter who wrote the news.

What's more, the "clarification" was printed on the jump page of the story or inside page, not on the front page where the original report came out. For some unexplained reasons, the editorial desk did not see it fit to highlight the correction by way of another sub-head on the front page.

Thus, I was not surprised when Aboitiz cried "foul" again. This time, with a passion that probably matched its distress over the tragedy that befell one of its ships. It questioned the newspaper's sense of accuracy and fairness in the way it "tried to cover up its mistake and refused to correct the sub-head on the same page where it appeared."

It was joined in this protest by Geoff Phoon, president of Keppel Cebu Shipyard Inc., where SuperFerry 14 allegedly caught fire. He wrote: "SuperFerry 14 was repaired at the Cebu Shipyard in 2000 and 2003 and there was no incident of any fire during the repair period. Therefore, the statement is incorrect.

"However, the report has caused us a lot of grief because our head office in Singapore (which) spotted it today has given us hell that we failed to report any fire incident on SuperFerry 14. We had to explain our side to them."

Evaluation

The complaints are valid.

The erroneous report about the fire accident history of SuperFerry 14 and the manner by which the correction of the mistake was made fell far short of the standards of accuracy and fairness that the INQUIRER has set for itself.

The newspaper's Manual of Editorial Policies states that "ideally, a correction should be published on the same page where the erroneous story was printed. But if that cannot be done, the correction should be published on another page, but in a highly visible section. Let's not hide our errata and corrections in the least visible and least attractive part of the page."

Following this standard, the inaccurate sub-head should have been corrected on the front page or, if that is not feasible due to space limitations, an acknowledgment of the error could perhaps been placed in a box and displayed near the place where the original sub-head appeared.

The INQUIRER apologizes to the readers and the affected parties for the mistakes earlier mentioned. It regrets whatever misimpression or wrong ideas the reports in question may have engendered in the public's mind.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Meddlesome

"The Supreme Court should learn to become less and less involved in matters concerning the economy."
—Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri referring to the recent Supreme Court ruling on the Philippine Mining Act

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

In memory of women's struggles

TODAY, March 8, is International Women's Day. In most of the 200 countries all over the world the women celebrate this day, whatever their ideology, religion or culture. And for good reason, too.

On March 8, 1857, women from the garment and textile industry in New York demonstrated against low wages, the 12-hour workday and increasing work load. They called for improved working conditions and equal pay for all women. Their march was dispersed by police, some of the women were arrested and some trampled in the confusion.

Three years later, in March of 1860, those women formed their own union and called again for these demands to be met.

On March 8, 1908, thousands of women from the needle trade industry, demonstrated for the same demands for legislation for shorter working hours and better working conditions.

In 1910, at an International Socialist Congress, German labor leader Clara Zetkin, proposed that March 8 be proclaimed International Women's Day in memory of those earlier struggles of women for a better life. It was to be a day set aside to internationally commemorate women's struggles and historical contributions.

In 1977, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution (No. 32/142) on International Women's Day, calling for women's participation in the strengthening of international peace and security and the struggles against colonialism, racism and racial foreign domination.

In 1978, the celebration of Women's History week began in Sonoma County, California. In 1979, American women belonging to 37 national organizations adopted a resolution for the creation of National Women's History Week.

In 1982, the United States Congress passed resolutions recognizing the week beginning March 7, 1982, as the first National Women's History Week.

Also in 1982, the first International Women's Day observance in the Philippines was marked by the Katipunan ng Bagong Pilipina, an organization of peasant women nationwide, and the Metro Manila Council of Women Balikatan Movement Inc., an organization of 16,900 women in Metro Manila. The two groups marched to the Batasan in Quezon City to protest a proposal to legalize prostitution in the country.

Since then, various groups in the country celebrate International Women's Day. Women artists hold all-women art shows, the National Federation of Women's Clubs of the Philippines hold annual symposia, the Metro Manila Council of Women Balikatan Movement hold its annual awards to outstanding Filipinas.

Elsewhere, International Women's Day is celebrated with grand activities.

—LEONARDA N. CAMACHO,
Metro Manila Council of Women
Balikatan Movement Inc.,
215 Regency Park,
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Mangyan groups mourn Magsino, Fortu

IF Vice Mayor Juvy Magsino was an activist, a human rights lawyer, a leftist, what was her crime? The answer is simple: her crime is that she carried in her platform the genuine struggle of the people.

Magsino opposed the militarization of Mindoro and led the people's resistance to political repression in venues such as fact-finding missions and peace dialogues. The deaths of Magsino and Leima Fortu prove the sad and cruel truth that not even public servants are spared from state-endorsed repression and military barbarism.

Heightened military operations in the Macapagal administration have claimed lives and violated civilian human rights, without the prospect of the delivery of justice and indemnification at hand. Under the guise of a strong republic and all-out peace efforts, military atrocities have worsened in the countryside.

In the island of Mindoro where nine battalions of the Armed Forces of the Philippines under the command of iron-fisted Col. Fernando Mesa are currently deployed, the blood of the innocents is shed without remorse. Our fellow Mangyans have been subjected to summary executions, torture, internal displacement, all the more damning our lives to poverty and oppression, and all the more we feel that the state, including its army, is not on the people's side.

Prior to the death of Magsino and Fortu, 18 human rights advocates have already been slain in Mindoro. People's resistance, including in the legal arena, has been met with political repression and militarist solutions.

If this appalling situation has not been enough to call the attention of President Macapagal-Arroyo as well as other government leaders who are all busy squandering the people's taxes on their election campaign propaganda, then we say not one of them deserves the position he or she is holding and their names should not be in our ballots!

The bloodshed in Mindoro must be stopped. Only the complete demilitarization of Mindoro will give way to a clean and just investigation. A favorable atmosphere for an honest investigation will never be possible unless the Macapagal administration orders the pullout of military troops from the whole island of Mindoro. The victims will never speak for they have completely lost trust in the sincerity of the military, the sole source of the fear and terror that gripped their hometown.

If the Macapagal administration and its leaders refuse to do this, then we urge them all to stop trumpeting justice and human rights, stop using human rights victims in their photo-ops and media hype for the elections.

The indigenous peoples from the Kalipunan ng Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (KAMP) and the Samahan ng Pantribu ng mga Mangyan ng Mindoro (SPMM) extol the late Vice Mayor Juvy Magsino and Leima Fortu. Indeed, they are a great loss to the people of Mindoro and to the Mangyans since they were among the very few remaining advocates of human rights and indigenous peoples especially among government leaders who carry the genuine voice and interest of the people of Mindoro.

We mourn their deaths and we will carry on the fight that has caused their death.

—TATAY PIDONG LIWANAG,
Samahan ng Pantribung Mangyan
ng Mindoro (SPMM),
Kalipunan ng Katutubong
Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (KAMP),
48-A Mapagbigay St.,
Barangay Pinyahan District,
Diliman, Quezon City

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Who is being infantile?

THE OBSERVATION of US Chargé d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli that it is "infantile" for the National Democratic Front to demand that the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army be removed from the list of foreign terrorist organizations, is insulting not only to the NDF but to the Philippine government as well.

On the contrary, I believe it is infantile of Mussomeli to assume that the US government and in particular his boss, President George W. Bush, have the right to order the Philippine government to label the CPP-NPA as a foreign terrorist organization. The CPP-NPA is neither foreign nor terrorist. It is a genuine Filipino revolutionary organization and only the Philippine government has the right to determine whether the NPA is terrorist or not.

The GRP and NDF have just resumed their negotiations and it is extremely important for the Filipino people that these negotiations will succeed and eventually bring about lasting peace. The meddling or interfering of the United States in this affair is a violation of Philippine sovereignty and it clearly shows that the United States is not interested at all in peace in the Philippines. The US war on terror is showing its devastating effects on the Philippines.

The Philippine International Forum, a group of foreign church and development workers in the Philippines, which recently celebrated its 20th anniversary of solidarity work with the Filipino people, made an urgent appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo to remove the tag of terrorism from the CPP-NPA. In its annual conference statement, it argues that both the GRP and the CPP-NPA are equal partners in the negotiations. One does not negotiate with a terrorist. You either force him to surrender or you eliminate him.

If the Philippine government is really interested in talking peace with the rebels, it should seriously consider their demand. And most of all, it should not allow the United States to poke its dirty nose into this very delicate matter.

—ARNOLD VAN VUGT,
Horeb Center, PN Roa Subd.,
Cagayan de oro City

Need to review carabao meat importation

I AM proud to be a hog farmer. I am proud to be part of an industry that puts food on the nation's tables and contributes to the nation's ability to feed itself now and in the future.

I thought people would want to protect the hog industry, and all other industries that produce food, our most basic necessity. But it seems some people are willing to sacrifice entire industries and the country's food security on the altar of money.

A meat importer, Samuel Señoren, has accused hog farmers of denying Filipino consumers access to "cheap" carabao meat. Señoren owns CSP International Commodities Corp., a local firm which represents Allana, a major Indian exporter of carabao meat to this country.

Carabao meat from India already enters the Philippines at the rate of 5 million kilos a month. It is used primarily by food processors who churn out millions of cans of corned "beef," meat loaf, beef loaf, hot dogs, chili con carne and the like. But apparently, CSP and Allana are not satisfied. They want to invade the wet markets with carabao meat. They want Filipinos to eat carabao meat, not only for breakfast and *merienda*, but also for lunch and dinner. We have been called a nation of dog eaters. CSP and Allana now want us to be a nation of carabao meat eaters. In short, they want to sell more carabao meat.

Hog farmers want to stop carabao meat importation from India. We do not deny it. We have very good reasons why. We want to protect the hog industry and other vulnerable livestock from foot and mouth disease (FMD).

India is an FMD-contaminated country. Not one zone has been classified as FMD-free by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE). The Philippines on the other hand, has FMD-free zones and aims to be classified as an FMD-free country this year. Importing Indian carabao meat is a definite risk.

There is another grave threat to the hog industry and our food security, the threat of indiscriminate and unwarranted importation of pork and pork substitutes.

We have seen what has happened and is still happening to local vegetable farmers. Already beset by problems, they are forced to contend with vegetable importation which drives down the prices of local products and cuts their profit to the bone.

Because profits are low, fewer people go into vegetable farming which in turn results in a decrease in vegetable production which leads to importation.

Now the hog industry may be beset by problems, but it can and does supply the local market with pork. It has the potential to export pork to neighboring countries. It is the source of livelihood of 3.5 million Filipinos.

—ALBERT R.T. LIM JR.,
president,
National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc.,
Suite 310 Reliance House,
205 Edsa cor. Rochester St.,
Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

'We have forgotten our greatness'

WHILE switching channels trying to get the latest on the Supreme Court hearing on the Fernando Poe Jr. disqualification case, I chanced upon the PCVC's "Halika na, Biyahe Tayo" MTV clip.

It was world-class advertising. The cinematography was as brilliant as the melody and lyrics of the song. It was a display of collaborative artistry. Consider this eclectic blend of performers (who all performed *pro bono*) representing different eras, political colors, even networks: Freddie Aguilar, Rico J. Puno, Rey Valera, Joey Ayala, Sharon Cuneta, April Boy Regino, Janno Gibbs, Ogie Alcasid, Jessa Zaragoza, Francis Magalona, Paolo Santos and Lea Salonga. Their message was clear and simple: Don't be a stranger in your own country. We have a lot of places to visit, exciting events to enjoy and things to discover. This is the only country we have. Let's cherish it.

The interactive presentation reminded me of the post-Edsa "Magkaisa" anthem. It was inspiring. It was unifying. It gave me goosebumps. It made me proud to be living in this country. For a brief moment, it reminded me that we're not totally hopeless despite the many problems that confront us. That there are more reasons to unite us than divide us. We have rich natural resources. We have proven to be world-class performers in many fields. So why are we in this rut?

One reason, of course, is that we have forgotten our greatness and would rather settle for mediocrity, starting with the kind of leaders we continue to elect.

In the coming elections therefore, it's critical that we choose leaders who can inspire us to do great things. Leaders who can unite and bring our pride back as a nation. We need leaders who can lead by example. More than popular, we need transformational leaders.

—ED DAMES,
26/F The World Center,
Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City

Bible as guide, not as norm

A LETTER writer, Jesus Natanauan, claimed the Bible is a surer guide for individuals and institutions for upright governance. (PDI, 1/21/04)

As he stated, the Bible was inspired by God and truly very relevant to our times.

He took exception to the statement of former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, that "a Villanueva presidency should not be based on the tenets of his church."

In addition, Natanauan said, "If I got it right, what Enrile meant to say was for Villanueva not to use 'his views of the Bible' or the Bible itself as 'the basis of governance' as in Iran during Khomeini's time."

In other words, Natanauan is in favor of using the text of the Bible in the governance and moral guidance of crooked individuals in the government as well as in other sectors of society.

Being a noted lawyer, Enrile is against a Villanueva presidency based on the tenets of his church because Enrile knows it is unconstitutional to do so.

Recalling our history, the Malolos Constitution provided for "the freedom and equality of religious worship as well as the separation of Church and the State" as it is enshrined today.

Hence, the doctrine of the Bible may be used by anybody for guidance in righteousness as opined by Natanauan, but not officially as a moral guide for the conduct of public office or the management of public servants. Why?

Well, our Constitution was tactfully crafted to avoid controversy in religion among its citizenry to maintain unity, peace and progress for the country.

—PHILIP FG WISCO,
5 Gen. Concepcion St.,
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City stakes claim over SM Baguio lot

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The city government is staking its claim over portions of Luneta Hill, where the SM City Baguio now stands, after a Makati regional trial court judge ruled last month that the property's auction by the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) might have been too hasty.

Vice Mayor Betty Lourdes Tabanda said the reversal made by Judge Rebecca Mariano on Feb. 13 granted the local government the opportunity to recover portions of the 34.7-hectare hill, which overlooks downtown Baguio, as well as other lands covered by Original Title Certificate No. 1.

Mariano's ruling pointed out DBP's procedural flaws in auctioning Luneta Hill, which rendered the sale void.

The late President Ferdinand Marcos, overlooking the city's stake in OCT No. 1, divided the government land to several beneficiaries, among them his business cronies, Tabanda said.

She said there are reports that SM owner Henry Sy acquired these OCT No. 1 properties after several Marcos cronies had defaulted on government loans that bankrolled their Baguio projects.

Sy won the Luneta Hill in a 1988 DBP auction "for a measly P2,000 per square meter," said Estrella Tano, city assessor.

DBP had foreclosed Resort Hotels Corp.'s Pines Hotel here in 1984, a few years after the facility was gutted by fire. The firm had defaulted on a P114-million loan which businessman Rodolfo Cuenca had mortgaged using Pines Hotel, Taal Vista and the Mindanao Hotel in Cagayan de Oro City.

Cuenca sued DBP in 1990 in an attempt to block the sale of the Luneta Hill to SM. Taipan John Gokongwei Jr. also sued DBP on the same year.

Councilor Federico Mandapat sponsored a resolution in 1992 that objected to SM's acquisition of the hill after he noted that Resort Hotels Inc. and Robinsons Investment Corp. contested the DBP sale. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources processed the sale.

Mandapat asserted the city government's claim over a 2,000-square meter section of the property where the government originally put up its city library.

But by 2001, city officials allowed SM Investments Corp. to proceed with the construction of the P400-million mall despite its "imperfect" deed to the lot, the INQUIRER learned this week.

City Engineer Leo Bernardez and the city planning office each obtained a written waiver from SM Investments Corp. that cleared the city government of any liability should a court ruling overturn SM's proprietary rights over Luneta Hill.

The firm's 2001 letter acknowledged that the Cuenca case remained unresolved while Gokongwei's complaint had been elevated to the Court of Appeals.

"We did not want to process the SM project because its title carried the *legend lis pendens* (a legal term reflecting that a title is being contested). But (Baguio Mayor Bernardo) Vergara instructed us to proceed," a source from the city planning office said.

City officials are still divided on the ruling's effect on the local economy.

An aide of Vergara said the government supported the project because SM's combined investments meant a P150-million windfall in aggregate taxes.

According to the city assessor's office, the mall alone carries an assessed value of P274,159,503, while its combined lots are valued at P141,775,481.

Edgar Baisas, SM Baguio assistant mall manager, said more than 150 stall owners are also taxed by the city government. SM is widening its stalls to accommodate 226 shops, he said.

A hotel is also being built at Luneta Hill, Baisas added. An environmental compliance certificate is being processed for the proposed SM Pines Hotel that would replace the original hotel that was built in 1949, according to the records of the city engineer's office.

But Tabanda said the city government's long-term interest must now be shaped after the court's ruling.

Mandapat, in a telephone interview, said the council is scheduled to discuss new evidence that the auction was undersold.

"I obtained a Bureau of Internal Revenue memorandum indicating that the zonal valuation at the time of the DBP auction was P10,000 per square meter. But DBP sold (Luneta Hill) to SM for a fifth of that value, which means the government lost P210 million in that deal alone," he said.

PMA topnotcher loves guns

By Vincent Cabreza, Frank Cimatu and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

FORT DEL PILAR, Baguio City—As a boy, Cadet First Class Rolly Angeles Joaquin was enamored with his toy gun and was longing to become a soldier, his mother Erlinda said.

On March 14, the 21-year-old Joaquin will fulfill his dream as he leads the 139 members of the Philippine Military Academy's Maliyab Class of 2004 in receiving their diploma from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Joaquin, a native of Aguilar, Pangasinan, said he wanted to be assigned in Mindanao. "That's where the action is," he said.

He wanted to be a soldier and asked his parents' permission to study at the Saint Louis Boys' High School here to acclimatize himself with the Baguio weather and prepare him for training at the PMA.

He had been at the top of his class even in his plebe year.

Joaquin, who will graduate as cum laude, will receive the PGMA achievement award for academics and the presidential saber from President Macapagal-Arroyo during commencement exercises at the CAP Trade and Cultural Center at Camp John Hay.

He will also receive the Army saber, Army professional courses award, natural sciences award, management award, academic group award and the Jusmag saber for Army, which will be given by the United States government.

It will be the first time the US government will give three Jusmag awards for the top graduates who will join the Army, Navy and Air Force. The recipients will be trained in the US.

Graduating second is Cadet First Class Gerald Philip Taduran Escalante of Makati City, the class baron, who will also receive the Jusmag Award for Air Force. Escalante will also receive the PGMA achievement award in leadership and the Philippine Air Force saber.

Escalante, the only magna cum laude in the class, will also receive the Vice Presidential saber.

Receiving the third Jusmag Award is Cadet First Class Gerry Tibay Catbagan of Pozzorubio, Pangasinan, who is ranked fourth in the honor roll.

The third top graduate is Mark Sibonga Tabon of Iligan City, who will receive the engineering sciences and math awards. He will also receive the Secretary of National Defense saber.

Cadet First Class Julia Enhambra Javier of Makati City, daughter of retired Army Maj. Gen. Julius Javier, is the only female cadet to make the top 10 this year, placing ninth. Javier will also receive the computing and sciences awards.

The young Javier, who grew up in Fort Bonifacio, said she idolizes her father, a member of the PMA Class 1970 and a former commander of the Central military command based in the Visayas.

Rounding up the top 10 graduates are Cadets First Class Ruel Acero of Pikit, North Cotabato (5th); Gary de Villa Hilario of San Antonio, Zambales (6th); Ronald Juan of Baguio City (7th); Marvin Inocencio of Balintawak, Quezon City (8th); and Rene Daoayan of Itogon, Benguet (10th).

Maj. Gen. Edilberto Adan, PMA superintendent, said turn-back cadets of Class 2003 and earlier batches composed most of the graduating cadets.

Two graduating cadets failed to graduate because of illnesses, while eight other cadets resigned two weeks ago after being charged with cheating.

Another cadet will not graduate as he is facing criminal charges for the accidental drowning of a freshman cadet last year.

Two of the original members of the class had died—one from a hazing incident four years ago and another from a heatstroke during the cadets' mandatory field training exercises.

Adan said it was the first time they included leadership and physical fitness abilities in their criteria for selecting the top graduates.

"These criteria had been used by other military academies all over the world," Adan said.

He said the cadets were judged by their peers, tactical officers and underlings for their leadership abilities.

In Pangasinan, Joaquin's mother, Erlinda, said she was very proud and happy of the achievement of her son.

"This is a very pleasant surprise," she told the INQUIRER from the family home in Aguilar town.

She said the family was hopeful that Joaquin would top the class. Had been getting good grades since preparatory school, she said.

Erlinda, 46, a stenographer at the Aguilar municipal circuit trial court, said her son is loving and obedient and has never failed to send her text messages to update her on his studies.

She said Joaquin is a thoughtful and kind brother to his siblings Rachel, 19, and Roderick, 17.

Erlinda said Joaquin has inspired Roderick to enter PMA, too.

Joaquin's father, Roque, 45, is a bus operator in Aguilar.

Graduation venue change

For the second time since 1981, the PMA will hold its graduation rites outside Fort Del Pilar. The ceremonies on March 14 will be held at the CAP Trade and Cultural Center inside Camp John Hay.

Adan said he decided to hold the graduation at the 5,000-seat CAP center partly as a precaution against the unpredictable Baguio weather.

He said the transfer would help them save money. He would not say how much the PMA is paying for the use of the facility but the convention center charges a minimum P100,000 for a day's use.

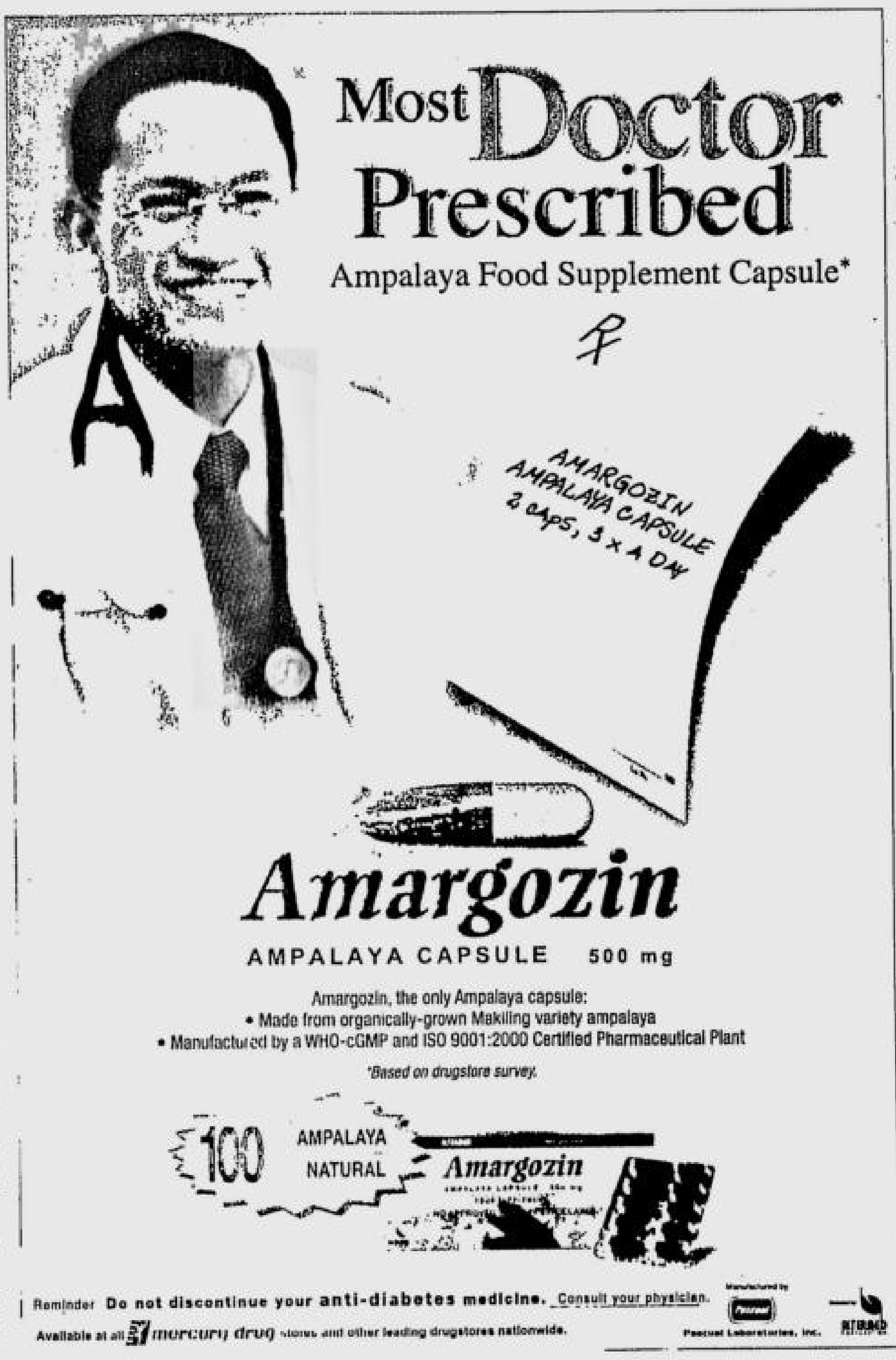
Adan said the graduation should be a more "dignified" military affair that would allow the cadets to interact with their commander in chief.

But instead of accolades for the initiative, the decision of Adan has been courting controversy.

Some members of the graduating class asked Adan to restore the rites to Borromeo Field, where the cadets could perform their parade marches and firearm drills.

Some PMA graduates were also surprised by the venue change.

"We were not advised about the event. I don't think many of us will agree to graduation being moved to John Hay," a PMA graduate said.



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Endangered sea turtle set free

UNISAN, Quezon—Quezon multi-sectoral groups have released a big Olive Ridley (*Lepidochelys olivaceaf*) marine turtle locally known as "pawikan" back to Tayabas Bay.

Quezon board member David Suarez said he paid P1,000 for the sea turtle when it was brought to him by a concerned fisherman on Wednesday.

"I was told by the fisherman that his fishing partner wanted to butcher the marine turtle to recoup for the cost and the trouble brought by accidentally catching the sea creature. So I immediately paid the asking price with a plan of setting the turtle back to his natural habitat," Suarez said.

"Marine turtles all over the world are either endangered or threatened. The amount that I paid is insignificant if I can help save one," he said.

Olive Ridley turtle typically forages off shore in surface waters or dives to depths of about 150 meters to feed on bottom-dwelling crustaceans.

Another disturbing study also revealed that the marine turtle also eats a wide variety of marine debris such as plastic bags, plastic and styrofoam pieces, tar balls, balloons, raw plastic pellets and other toxic food materials, which contribute to their thinning population.

Fisherman Ronel Alas said he could not in conscience allow his partner to butcher the marine turtle. "It was my third turtle catch but the first two, I immediately released after I untangled them from my nets.

But this time, my partner would not allow me to do so. He really wanted to kill the *pawikan* and sell the meat and the shell," Alas said.

The sea turtle faces threat because of its highly attractive shell.

In Japan alone, "bekko," a Japanese word for the turtle shell, commands good prices as ornamental pieces.

Alas said there is always a ready marine turtle meat buyer in town.

"They are after the balls of the male specie. It commands good price from among rich Chinese buyers because of its reported aphrodisiac quality," the fisherman said.

This sea turtle specie, named for its olive green-colored shell, has been classified as "endangered" (facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future) by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

Suarez said he immediately contacted Tanggol Kalikasan in Lucena City to ask for assistance on how to safely release the sea turtle.

Perhaps sensing that he would soon be set free, the sea turtle was in a playful mood when the Tanggol Kalikasan staff and environment officials arrived.

The marine turtle measured 68-69 centimeters in carapace length that classified it as a fully matured specie.

The sea turtle was released just in front of the coastal town at around 10 a.m.

In October last year, another big "loggerhead" marine turtle was also released back to Tayabas Bay fronting Pagbilao town.

Section 97 of the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 prohibits "fishing or taking of rare, threatened or endangered species."

Marine turtle poaching is punishable by 12 to 20 years imprisonment. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

BOARD Member David Suarez (right) aboard a rigger boat led the multi-sectoral groups that let loose an Olive Ridley marine turtle back to Tayabas Bay.

DELFIN MALLARI JR./PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

GMA gives ₱300M more to Palawan

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo gave another P300 million to Palawan from the Camago Malampaya share.

The declaration, made during a campaign sortie Friday at the Puerto Princesa City Coliseum, drew applause from the crowd.

On Dec. 8, 2003, Ms Macapagal issued Executive Order 254, which awarded Palawan P300 million as financial assistance package. But the amount, according to the EO, is not part of the share of Palawan from Service Contract No. 38 or the Camago-Malampaya Natural Gas to Power Project, which is operated by Shell Philippines Exploration BV and the biggest foreign investment in the country.

The check of P100 million for the provincial government had already been deposited to Land Bank of the Philippines while the other P200 million is distributed equally between the two congressional districts.

Ms Macapagal said, she will sign another EO to give Palawan P300 million more. But this time, the whole amount has already been allocated to several projects.

Each of the 23 municipalities and this city will get P3 million while the 432 barangays of Palawan will get P300,000 each.

The remaining amount is distributed among the following projects: El Nido Airport, P40 million; Southern Palawan Road, P30 million; land for the landless, P20 million; Rizal Avenue (Puerto Princesa) widening, P20 million; scholarship program, P15 million; provincial hospital, P10 million; Palawan State University, P10 million and livelihood for market vendors, P5 million.

"This amount is just a downpayment," she said, if the law will be amended to make it favorable to Palawan.

She said if the court decides against the provincial government, the amount becomes a gift to Palawan.

The provincial government filed last May 2003 a petition before the Puerto Princesa City Regional Trial Court seeking to compel the national government to recognize Palawan's legal and rightful share, which should have been released to the province since the start of the project's commercial operation in 2001.

Based on the Local Government Code, Palawan is entitled to 40-percent share from the gas proceeds, which the Department of Energy projected to be equivalent to $2.1 billion over the next 20 years.

In a talk with representatives of non-government and people's organizations, who held rallies to air their sentiments on the Malampaya issue, the President, through

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez said her administration was willing to give Palawan its legal share should the court decide on it. *Jofelle Tesorio and Geraldford Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Women hold fun run vs violence

BAGUIO CITY—About 60 women and students on Saturday called for a violence-free community through a 5-km fun run on Loakan Road here.

The runners also condemned violence in any form, "from the most subtle . . . sexist slurs to the most destructive wars and genocide."

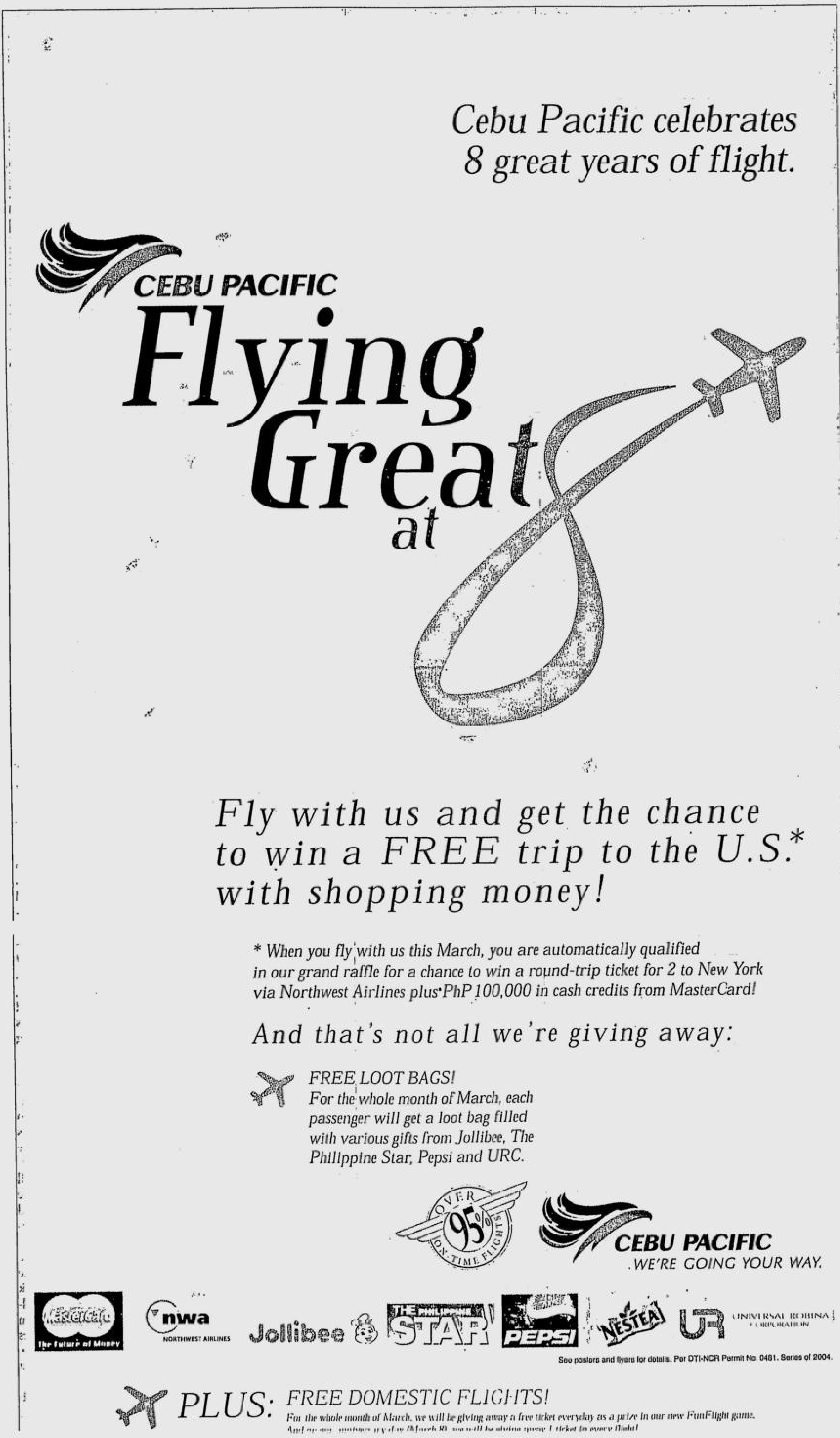
"When it comes to violence, there seems to be a conspiracy of silence and we do not want this to happen anymore," said Letty Miana, deputy executive director of the women's rights group Ebgan Inc.

A statement from the group said violence "intertwines with culture, tradition, religion, economy and politics, and cuts across class, color, creed and age."

"(Violence) could be self-directed, collective and interpersonal; it could be physical, sexual, psychological and acts of deprivation of neglect," the statement said.

It also condemned violence in the home and called this "insidious and treacherous" form of violence in a place where one would at least expect to encounter it.

"Our ideas of family, shaped by social institutions like the Church and the media, state and academe uphold traditional notions of family structure and the inviolability of family unity. (But) we recognize too that such notions have bred unequal power relationships and perpetrated violence in the family through a conspiracy of silence," it said. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



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'Gloria rice' is seed of change for farm families

Vigorous rice strain that can double farm harvests promises self-sufficiency for the country—and better lives for its venturesome tillers.

HYBRID RICE SEEDS ARE DOUBLING HARVESTS FOR MODEL FARMER BENIGNO RAMOS OF PILA, LAGUNA.

'GLORIA RICE' has been good for Benigno Ramos, his wife Herminia, and their grandchildren, Ryan Christian and Almira. 'Ka Igno,' who is 71, is the leading farmer of Pila, Laguna. An elementary-school dropout, he has pulled himself and his family out of poverty through hard work, dogged thrift, and a venturesome nature. First among the Pila farmers to try out the hybrid seeds President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo started to propagate in 2001, Ramos has doubled the yield of his 11-hectare farm.

OTHER SUCCESS STORIES

Ramos's hybrid-seed record so far is 200 cavans a hectare. "Using the old inbred seeds, I was happy if I harvested 100 cavans, but sometimes it dropped below that."

In other places yields have actually been even bigger. Ernesto Pablo of Rizal, Oriental Mindoro, harvested 212 cavans for a dry-season crop, and 240 cavans for a wet-season crop—giving him P90,617 a hectare. Luz Lozada, a 70-year-old farmer of Sta. Cruz, Davao del Sur, harvested 208 cavans in the dry season and 186 cavans in the wet on her five-hectare farm, netting P205,000. She has built her own water-impounding system, which she has also stocked with tilapya.

Teofilo Antonio of San Manuel, Isabela, has planted his entire 30 hectares to hybrid seeds. Now he averages 150 cavans and earns P1.2 million in one crop season. A small farmer, Antonio Villanueva of Tagudin, Ilocos Sur, tills only four-fifths of a hectare; last year he harvested 172 cavans and earned P79,013.

APOSTLE OF THE NEW RICE STRAIN

'Ka Igno' Ramos typifies the entrepreneurial farmers who have become apostles of the new rice strain. Leaving school after Grade Four, he worked five years for Pila landowners as a day-laborer before he could even become a sharecropper. He then saved for 15 years to buy his first piece of land and the carabao he needed to work it. Through grit and industry, he and his wife of 40 years have sent all their six children through college.

After spending some weeks learning the cultivation and care of hybrid rice from Department of Agriculture (DA) technicians, Ka Igno planted his first crop in November 2002. But the palay grew too tall and bent flat to the ground when it became heavy with grain. The DA people got him another 20 kilos of hybrid seeds—enough for a hectare—and he gamely tried again. This time he harvested 200 cavans.

Now Ramos uses up 400 kilos of hybrid seeds every planting season. He tills 11 hectares of farmland—three of which he owns, and eight he sharecrops. He plants five crops in a two-year cycle, watering his fields with three deep-well pumps. His fields have become DA model farms. Ka Igno happily teaches the technology to Laguna farmers that DA people bring to his farm. Pila has become the largest hybrid-rice producer in Laguna.

Hybrid rice was first developed in China— three-fifths of whose 33 million hectares of riceland are already planted to the new seeds. The technology exploits the concept of 'hybrid vigor'—which scientists have also applied to new varieties of corn. The seeds are cross-pollinated, using 'mother' and 'father' rice strains having different gene endowments. Typically hybrid rice roots sink deeper into the soil. Their leaves spread wider than inbred strains; shoots multiply. The crop is ready for harvest in 123 days.

The Chinese technology was adapted to national conditions by DA's research institute, *PhilRice*. Field trials of the local variety—named *Mestizo* —began in 1998. They showed the hybrid seed will yield at least 26 more cavans a hectare—compared with the most popular inbred strain, using the same fertilizer inputs.

Mestizo's potential yield is as high as 240 cavans. Then, too, the rice it yields is soft and aromatic. Already hybrid rice is being served at Jollibee and MacDonald's outlets in Manila.

Subsequently commercial seed-growers developed their own varieties. SL Agritech produced SL 8, which Ramos uses; Bayer Cropscience, *Bigante*, and Monsanto, *Magilas*. *Mestizo* is still the most widely available.

NEW SEEDS USES MORE WORKERS

President Arroyo initiated commercialization of hybrid-rice technology in 2001—as the farming component of her 'Million Jobs Program' managed by then-Presidential Adviser Luis P. Lorenzo Jr. Part of the new seed-technology's attraction is that it is more labor-intensive than the old one. Most of the inbred rices are simply broadcast on the paddies. Mestizo seedlings must be transplanted from seed beds, much as the traditional rices used to be.

Promotion started in 11 provinces that already have high rice yields, large irrigated or potentially irrigable lands, and favorable growing conditions. Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Ecija, and Camarines Sur in Luzon; Bohol and Iloilo in the Visayas; and the three Davao provinces, as well as Lanao del Norte and Maguindanao in Mindanao—these are the provinces President Arroyo and DA Secretary Lorenzo count on to start off the country's hybrid-rice revolution.

Use of the new seeds has spread from 12,550 hectares in 2001 to 103,332 hectares in 2003. This year Lorenzo has set DA the target of 600,000 hectares. Most everywhere it is the larger farmers who have taken avidly to the hybrid seeds—because the strain needs a great deal more care than the inbred ones do.

Typically, inbred seeds are simply selected from the previous crop. The new-type farmer must invest in new seeds every season, if he is to benefit from hybrid vigor. Seedbeds must be prepared; transplanted seedlings spaced, fertilized, and protected from pests. The water the seedlings receive at various stages must be precisely controlled. Harvesting, too, must be done at just the right time.

Early in the nineteenth century, the Philippines had actually exported rice to Southern China. But it has become a large importer. Two years ago, it bought one million metric tons; last year it imported 500,000 metric tons. The Arroyo Administration, aiming at self-sufficiency, is nurturing the new rice technology. It has laid out a network of technologists, demonstration farms and field schools; irrigation systems, seed and fertilizer subsidies, and micro-credit schemes—as well as post-harvest facilities and marketing cooperatives.

GROW MORE RICE, IMPORT LESS

Bridging the gap between entrepreneurial farmers like Ka Igno Ramos and the typical farmer is the key. Studies show the average Filipino farmer is only 40% as efficient as the best one. Half of all our tillers still harvest no more than 60 cavans a hectare. And they're still at the mercy of typhoons, droughts, and pests.

Awakening these subsistence peasants to the possibilities of the new rice technology is the task President Arroyo and her Agriculture officials have imposed on themselves. Secretary Lorenzo does *not* underestimate its magnitude. All he knows is that the job must be done. 'Twenty years from now," he muses, "there will be 107 million of us; and we will need 65% more rice than we do now."

Agriculture powers growth

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo and DA Secretary Cito Lorenzo celebrate hybrid-rice harvest. Over 2001-2003 agriculture has powered economic growth. It accounts for one-fifth of domestic output. To compensate for the recession in foreign trade and industrial production, the Arroyo Administration has focused on farming, fishing, and rural development. Heavy investments in water conservation, irrigation systems, post-harvest facilities, and farm-to-market roads have paid off in bumper crops in both rice and corn.

An activist role for the NFA

A reinvigorated National Food Authority backs the Arroyo Administration's drive for self-sufficiency and food security. The NFA distributes certified seeds and fertilizers to farmers in DA's cereal-growing programs. It has also become a ready market for both certified and hybrid-seed harvests. For the first time in its 31-year history, the NFA now competes aggressively with palay traders at the farm gate. This strategy has stabilized farm-gate prices and brought them up close to the NFA's support prices. The NFA has also modernized its post-harvest facilities—which it is setting up in "Gloria rice"-producing regions nationwide, for the priority use of the farmer-cooperatives that NFA is nurturing. For this year's palay-buying seasons, President Arroyo has raised NFA's procurement fund from P1 billion in 2003 to P4 billion—so that it could bolster the country's food-security stocks.

United Nations Award for 'Gloria Rice'

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has bestowed its prestigious Ceres Award on President Arroyo for her agricultural modernization program—which the FAO expects will ease Philippine hunger and poverty in large measure. FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf himself presented the award to President Arroyo at Malacañang on February 20, 2004.

Cory remains firm she won't endorse any candidate

By Raj Padilla
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Among the presidential candidates, it is President Macapagal-Arroyo who has posed the most number of times with former President Corazon Aquino.

In Ms Macapagal's case, however, pictures don't speak a thousand words, as Aquino has remained firm on her decision not to endorse any candidate in the May 10 presidential elections.

"I'm not endorsing anybody, but I'm praying for peaceful and credible elections," Aquino said in an interview upon her arrival at the Iloilo Domestic Airport on Friday afternoon.

When asked what advice she could give voters, she said: "I hope they'll pray with me and study well all of the candidates to make a good choice."

Aquino refused to lay down any criteria for choosing candidates. "It's for the people to make decisions on who is the best for them," she said.

Although she is not endorsing anybody, the former President vowed to be a part of efforts aimed at safeguarding the sanctity of the ballot.

"I urge our people to help, like joining Namfrel (National Movement for Free Elections) or watching carefully the counting of the ballots," she said.

Aquino was in Iloilo on the invitation of the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Catholic Women's Organizations which held its 12th National Convention at the Grand Hotel here on Saturday and Sunday.

She was welcomed at the airport by Fanny Uy, national president of the federation.

Cory defends GMA treatment of Erap

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was guest of honor and speaker.

Drilon said there was "absolutely" no basis for the filing of criminal charges against Ms Macapagal.

"The matter of the place of detention and how Erap (Estrada) is treated are matters that the court will determine. The President will only follow what the courts will direct," said Drilon, head of the pro-administration Liberal Party.

Prosecutors insist, however, that the court would not have condoned Estrada's excursions without some form of instruction from Malacañang.

Private prosecutor Marichu Lambino said she was planning to file charges against Ms Macapagal, Housing Secretary Michael Defensor, Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, Chief Supt. Rolando Sacramento and all of the Estrada guards "for conniving or consenting with evasion of imprisonment" of an accused, which is punishable under the Revised Penal Code.

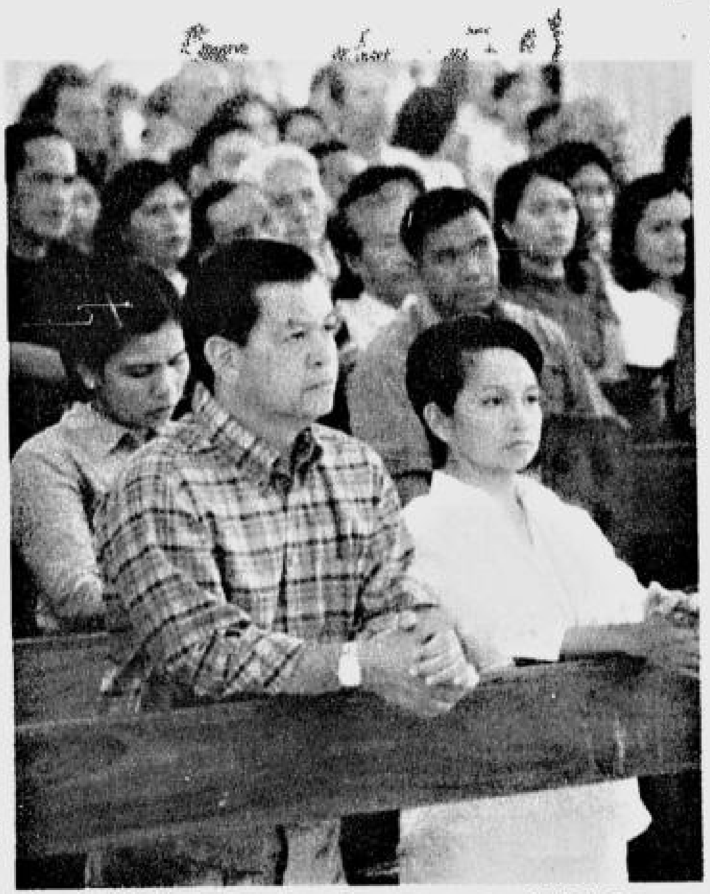
Lambino said Ms Macapagal and the other officials were also liable for contempt of court for disobeying the Sandiganbayan order that Estrada be detained at Camp Capinpin.

Ms Macapagal said Thursday she saw nothing wrong with treating a former President with dignity. But critics alleged the decision was intended to curry favor with Estrada's followers ahead of the May 10 presidential election.

Nothing wrong

Drilon said Ms Macapagal should not be held accountable for the place where Estrada is detained even if Defensor, Ms Macapagal's campaign spokesperson, was seen visiting the villa, which has a swimming pool and private chapel.

"Anybody can visit the place," he said. "There is nothing wrong with visiting the former President. Secretary Defensor's visit is absolutely immaterial."



PRESIDENT Macapagal and her running mate, Sen. Noli de Castro, hear Mass at the San Nicholas Cathedral in Surigao City before their campaign sortie.
JERRY CARUAL/PCPO-MALACAÑANG

Drilon said Estrada himself had denied that he was under house arrest at his villa. Estrada said Friday that he stayed at the rest house only two days a week and only when he had guests.

"What he's saying is he accepts visitors there. I assume this is not in violation of any order as long as he's in detention at the camp," Drilon said.

Defensor said the private prosecutors of Estrada were barking up the wrong tree when they threatened to file criminal charges against Ms Macapagal.

He said it was not up to Ms Macapagal to decide where Estrada should be detained. This, he said, was the responsibility of the Sandiganbayan, which sets the terms of Estrada's detention, and the PNP which is responsible for Estrada's security.

In Malacañang, presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye told reporters there had been no government involvement in the decision of the special anti-graft court to allow Estrada to visit his villa.

"This is all under the control of the Sandiganbayan. Whatever was implemented by the jailers of our former president was within the decision, within the order of the Sandiganbayan," Bunye said.

Independence

The government's chief prosecutor in the plunder case against Estrada has challenged the Sandiganbayan to assert its "independence" and authority over the deposed President's detention.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio made the call even as he expressed great disappointment over what he called the brazen manner by which the police and some Malacañang officials usurped the Sandiganbayan's power over Estrada's detention.

"The court can take action on its own to show that it is still in control," Villa-Ignacio said late Saturday night.

"*Galit ako. Grabe. Garapalan* (I'm angry. It's too much. It's so brazen)," he said of Estrada's reported "country club arrest," which, according to him, was done without the approval of the Sandiganbayan.

He said that until now, the anti-graft court could not explain how Estrada was transferred to his rest house.

Earlier, Estrada admitted that he only got the approval of Sacramento and Ebdane for the transfer.

"The question: 'Who has effective control over Estrada?' It appears now that the Sandiganbayan has no more control over the accused," said Villa-Ignacio, referring of the Sandiganbayan's first division, which is chaired by Presiding Justice Minita Chico-Nazario.

Humiliation

"I wonder until when will the court allow itself to be embarrassed. How long will the special division endure humiliation and embarrassment," he said.

Villa-Ignacio said either the government prosecutors under the Office of the Ombudsman or the private prosecutors in the graft and plunder case could take action on the matter, but he said it would be better if the Sandiganbayan initiated action against the erring officials.

He said the court could ask Estrada's custodian to appear in court and explain why Estrada was under "house arrest."

"Even Defensor can be brought in (to explain)," he said.

If not, he said, government prosecutors could file a motion "to show cause why the custodian should not be cited in contempt" for Estrada's transfer to his vacation estate.

Lambino raised doubts on whether Nazario would take action on the matter, given the fact that she is indebted to Ms Macapagal for appointing her Supreme Court justice, although the matter had been temporarily put on hold.

Even before her appointment, Nazario came under fire for allegedly toeing Malacañang's line in going easy on Estrada. *With reports from Gil Cabacungan Jr. and AFP*

I'm just here, Estrada tells journalists

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Sacramento said security for Estrada was so strict that visitors could see him only from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily at the receiving area of the Camp Capinpin jail. There is no limit for the number of visitors.

Not privy to arrangement

Cabuay said he was not privy to the arrangement allowing Estrada to stay at his rest house.

But Cabuay suggested that the PNP security policy on Estrada be reviewed. He said there was a need to clarify his Army division's role in guarding Estrada at the camp.

"Whether we like it or not, we will also be blamed if something happens to him here because this is our camp," he told reporters.

In Catbalogan, Samar, Estrada's son, Jinggoy, and other senatorial candidates of the opposition said they did not see anything wrong with the housing arrangement that the former President is enjoying.

"I hope they won't make … a big deal (out of this)," Jinggoy told reporters in reference to the new arrangement.

Before he spoke at a rally of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, the young Estrada confirmed that his father would sometimes stay at the rest house in Tanay, Rizal, but only once or twice a week.

"Whenever he stays on the farm, he is heavily guarded and no one can just come in there," he said.

The young Estrada denied speculations that the housing arrangement was the result of a deal between his father and President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Asked if he knew who paved the way for the arrangement, the young Estrada said he did not. But at one point, he replied, "*Minsan pakiusapan lang yan* (Sometimes it's done though requests)."

Saying that President Macapagal-Arroyo was aware of the setup, he dismissed speculations that this was all politically motivated.

"In fairness to GMA, *wala* (none)," he said.

Humanitarian reasons

He said the new setup for his father was for "humanitarian reasons." Unlike at the Army camp where his movements were "limited," the former President can move around in the 15-hectare estate, he said.

Having been detained with his father, the young Estrada recalled the loneliness they had felt in the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City.

KNP senatorial candidates Alfredo Lim and Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the administration allowed the setup for humanitarian reasons.

Perhaps this was because Estrada was ailing, Lim said. Like the young Estrada, he shrugged off suggestions that the arrangement was politically motivated.

"Let's leave it at that, that there is a presumption of regularity," the former Manila mayor told reporters.

Pimentel said he did not know whether Ms Macapagal violated anything. He surmised that "this is an arrangement that has been done with the judiciary looking at it with some kind of implicit approval."

"I suppose that this is part of the President's trying to reach out to Estrada," the reelectionist senator said.

This time …

From page A1

share this distaste for, as he has put it more than once, "mere words"?

Chances are, she doesn't.

The actress will be remembered for urging the people—in a public plaza, on national television, at the onset of the fiery issue over her husband's nationality: "Let us all listen (to the Supreme Court) and be calm!" Even the mythical Panday never came across with such formidable authority—and that was just a small part of Susan's well-crafted statement.

Role in gov't

Former Education Secretary Raul Roco yesterday proposed a debate among the spouses of all aspirants to the highest position in the land. The discussion should be about the role of a president's spouse in the government, he said, proudly adding that his wife Sonia was willing and able to participate in such an undertaking.

The role of first lady or first gentleman is a valid subject of scrutiny, according to Roco, standard-bearer of Alyansa ng Pag-asa. "If we want to clarify all issues, the spouses' views should be discussed in public."

It should be explained beforehand how the wife or husband of the future president would handle the trappings of the position, among other things, Roco told reporters during a break in his two-day Pangasinan campaign sortie. "We need only recall how one or two spouses abused power."

Roco made the proposal in the wake of Poe's obstinate refusal to join any presidential debate on issues and government platforms, labeling it "divisive" and a waste of time, since he could explain his platform to the people some other way.

While maintaining that such a discussion was still necessary, Roco said the role of the spouse should also be laid out clearly at this point. "Certainly, stealing should not be part of it."

Champion orator

Sonia was prepared to face the other spouses, he said, because "she's a champion orator" and had gone to London for training in Speech and Drama. Even so, he said, First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo should not be afraid of such a confrontation "because he's a lawyer."

As president, Roco said, he would expect his wife to be engaged in promoting culture. He was sure Sonia would be happy in that job. "She acts and directs plays … (and) she hates going to Malacañang."

On Saturday, Roco advised students of the National College of Science and Technology in San Fernando City, La Union, to junk Poe if he continued to shun debates.

"A presidential debate is very important to all of us," he said. "If we don't know what's in his heart and mind, we should not vote for him because we may end up getting deceived."

GMA: I'm willing to serve as transition president

From page A1

ment in the regions, bring governance closer to the people and do away with the Edsa way of changing leaders.

"I personally prefer a parliamentary, federal form of government. The federal (aspect) is more important to me than the parliamentary (one) because it is very, very difficult to administer Mindanao from Manila," she said.

If elected, Ms Macapagal said she would submit to the new Congress an administration measure calling for Charter change.

Depends on Congress

Asked if she would agree to serve only half of her new six-year term to pave the way for a shift to the parliamentary form of government in 2007, Ms Macapagal replied: "Ah, yes … I am open. (But) it depends on what Congress will enact."

Explaining her stand on various issues in the INQUIRER's "Talk of the Town" last week, Ms Macapagal said that she would initiate Charter change through a constitutional convention whose delegates could be elected simultaneously with barangay officials in 2005.

She said the shift from a centralized, unitary type of government to a federal one would empower regional governments, bring governance and public service closer to the people, speed up regional development, reduce corruption, and make government accountable to the citizenry.

Speaking from experience, she said it was very difficult to run an archipelago like the Philippines with a unitary government based in Manila.

Ms Macapagal said many of the country's problems stemmed from the perennial gridlock between the coequal branches of government under the present system.

"Now the reason why I feel that a parliamentary form of government is better for the country is that I feel there should be not a separation but a merging of powers between the executive and the legislative because there is so much gridlock in our system. Even your allies who are elected with you, once they are seated in the Senate then they consider themselves independent of you," she said.

When she was a senator and allied with then President Fidel Ramos, Ms Macapagal said she often took a stand opposed to that of his administration.

"So instead of working together and speeding up legislation and needed reforms, there was gridlock,'" Ms Macapagal said.

Misuari case

She said she saw the advantage of a parliamentary system during what she called former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Nur Misuari's "little rebellion" in late 2001 when she backed Parouk Hussin as the new ARMM governor.

She admitted for the first time that she had called up then Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad to ask him to hold Misuari until Hussin could take his oath. After his supporters staged the bloody revolt, Misuari fled to Malaysia but was arrested there.

Secure joint resolution

According to Ms Macapagal, Mahathir told her that he could not hold Misuari beyond one month as provided for by law but he promised her that he would consult his Cabinet.

"Imagine, he was a strongman and he had to consult his Cabinet. Because me, I'm the President and I have a Cabinet and they can have all their opinions but there is a majority of one," she said.

"And I realized why. Because the Cabinet members are members of parliament. And, therefore, when the parliament leaders in the Cabinet agree and give their approval, it's like Congress has given its approval," she said.

In her case, Ms Macapagal said she would need to secure a joint resolution from Congress before she could relax any restrictions provided by law. "Imagine if Mahathir asked me (for a similar request), I would need a joint resolution from Congress to have an exemption and I certainly wouldn't get it in three days," she said.

Parliamentary system

Under a parliamentary system, she said there would also be no need to oust an elected leader through an Edsa "people power" uprising.

"If we have a parliamentary government, we don't need Edsa because the parliament can be dissolved if a president has lost the confidence of the people. He can be ousted in a civilized and conventional manner as done by other parliamentary systems," said Ms Macapagal, who succeeded Joseph Estrada after he was ousted in Edsa II.

Unimaginable

Asked how the peso would fare should the people elect the "wrong president," Ms Macapagal replied: "Unimaginable."

"It's as if we didn't learn from the past. If you don't learn from the past, the confidence (of investors) would even be less than it was in the past," said Ms Macapagal, who is running neck-and-neck with actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Local and foreign investors have blamed the peso's fall on the uncertainty of the coming presidential election if Poe, a high school dropout who has been described as a clone of Estrada, keeps pundits guessing on how he plans to run a government beset by a rising budget deficit and corruption, and an economy hobbled by unemployment and weak investor confidence.

But if the "right president" wins, Ms Macapagal said the peso should immediately appreciate to 52 to the dollar. Even so, she said she was not overly concerned about the peso's current level at about 56 to the dollar. "All politics considered, that is just about the natural value of the peso. I'm not saying it's OK but the politicking is very bad," she said. *With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

GMA offers ₱5M to build Urdaneta market

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

URDANETA CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo dangled a carrot to residents here in the form of P5 million for the reconstruction of the public market that was gutted by fire last year.

The President already released P5 million for the market's reconstruction, but she announced during the Ilocos Region Athletic Association (Iraa) meet here on Sunday that she was releasing another P5 million because Mayor Amadeo Perez told her that the funds were not enough.

"This is my gift to the city for hosting the Iraa meet," Ms Macapagal said in Ilocano before she opened the Iraa games.

She also announced that her government would prepare an early retirement plan for government employees to lure them to retire early and become entrepreneurs. She said the program aim is to trim the bureaucracy and provide better salaries for government workers.

As in her past campaign sorties, the President emphasized her being a Pangasinense and reminded her audience that she could speak both Pangasinan and Ilocano languages.

"This is my district," she stressed. Her late mother Eva Macaraeg-Macapagal was a native of Binalonan town, which is a part of the fifth district.

Another presidential candidate, actor Fernando Poe Jr., also traces his roots to this vote-rich province, but cannot speak the local tongues.

The opening of the Iraa meet participated in by student athletes and school officials from Pangasinan, Ilocos Sur, Ilocos Norte and La Union turned into a virtual political rally after the speakers asked the audience to vote for Ms Macapagal.

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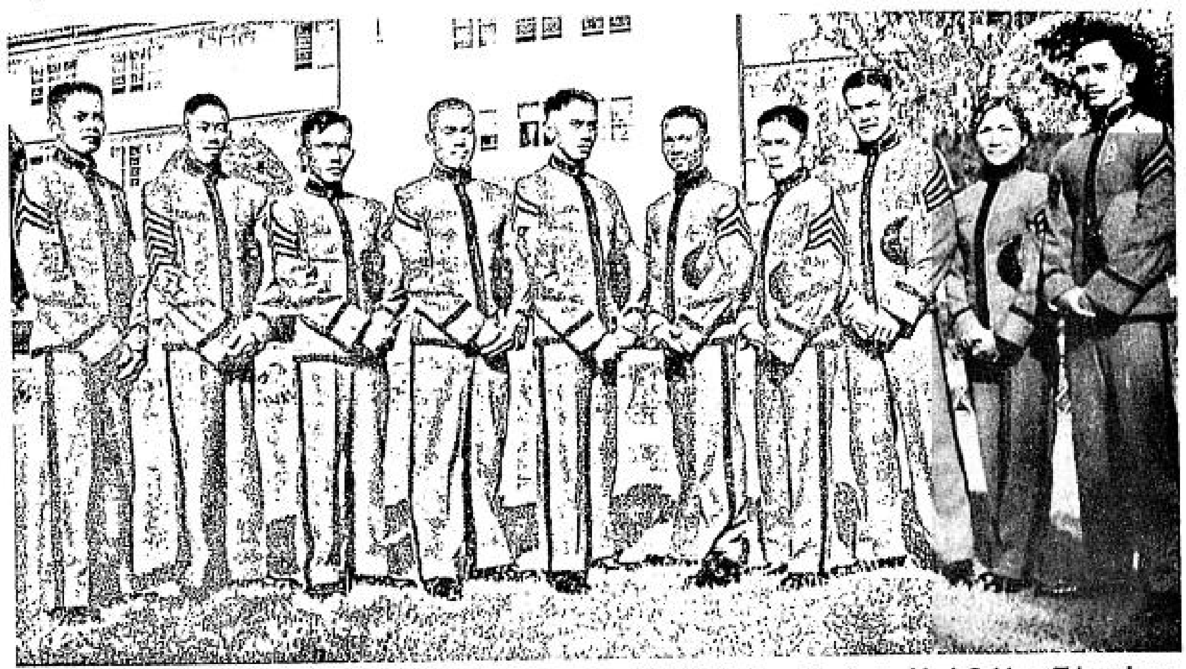

TOP 10 PMA GRADS: (From left): Rolly Angeles Joaquin, Gerald Philip Taduran Escalante, Mark Sobinga Tabon, Jerry Tibay Catbagan, Ruel Carillo Acero, Gary de Vera Hilario, Ronald Barrias Juan, Marvin A. Inocencio, Julie Enjambre Javier and Rene Torres Dao-ayan.
TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Top woman cadet adores 'super goat'

From page A1

took the PMA exams in 2001. I wanted to join the army because I adored my father," Cadet Javier, one of 11 female graduates, told reporters during a press conference here on Saturday.

"I (also) find all PMA graduates handsome, including my fellow La Sallian Antonio Trillanes IV," she said, referring to one of the leaders of the failed Oakwood mutiny last year, who graduated in 1995.

Peculiar class

Javier's accomplishment is made more remarkable by the peculiarity of her class.

Maj. Gen. Edilberto Adan, PMA superintendent, has worked in the last five years to reduce the number of cadets who fail to graduate on time.

Maliyab Class is an illustration of the academy's crisis over its huge attrition rate. Only 79 out of the original 367 members are going to be commissioned on March 14 by President Macapagal-Arroyo. The rest of the graduating class is composed of turn-back cadets from previous classes, who had repeated a year.

Adan said the majority of the original class would be repeating a year, and would therefore join Class 2005.

The elder Javier may have graduated last with a graded average of 1.941, but he belonged to 65 out of the original 86 members of his class who were commissioned by the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

Among Javier's classmates were former AFP Chief of Staff Roy Cimatu, now special envoy to the Middle East; Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr.; and former Col. Irwin Ver, son of Marcos' AFP Chief of Staff Fabian Ver.

Military experts anticipated the inclusion of women in the male-dominated corps of cadets in 1993 to inject new vitality into the century-old system, a member of the PMA faculty said.

"They (expected) a rivalry that would bring out the best. The females matched the males for the most part of (that) decade," the instructor recalled.

More libertarian

The first batch of female cadets graduated in 1997. Two years later, Arlene de la Cruz made history by graduating at the top of her class.

On the other hand, the instructor said, the entry of females also generated a more libertarian approach to training new soldiers. PMA officials acknowledge the more "open" environment at the academy now. Outside of their uniforms, many of the cadets, male and female alike, look like ordinary teenagers. Many of them actively participate in various community projects.

Adan told reporters that the academy's attrition problem was systemic, and not a gender issue. He said previous classes had toiled under extreme pressure from a "voluminous" academic course and severe physical training.

The academy has lessened the number of subjects a cadet is required to take each year.

Adan said the academy also qualified its grading criteria by putting equal emphasis on physical training and academics, the better to emphasize PMA's military character. He said the "strengthened" system shifts the burden of grades from academic subjects, which now consist 60 percent of the cadet's rating, to include a 25-percent rating for leadership, and 15 percent for physical fitness. *With a report from Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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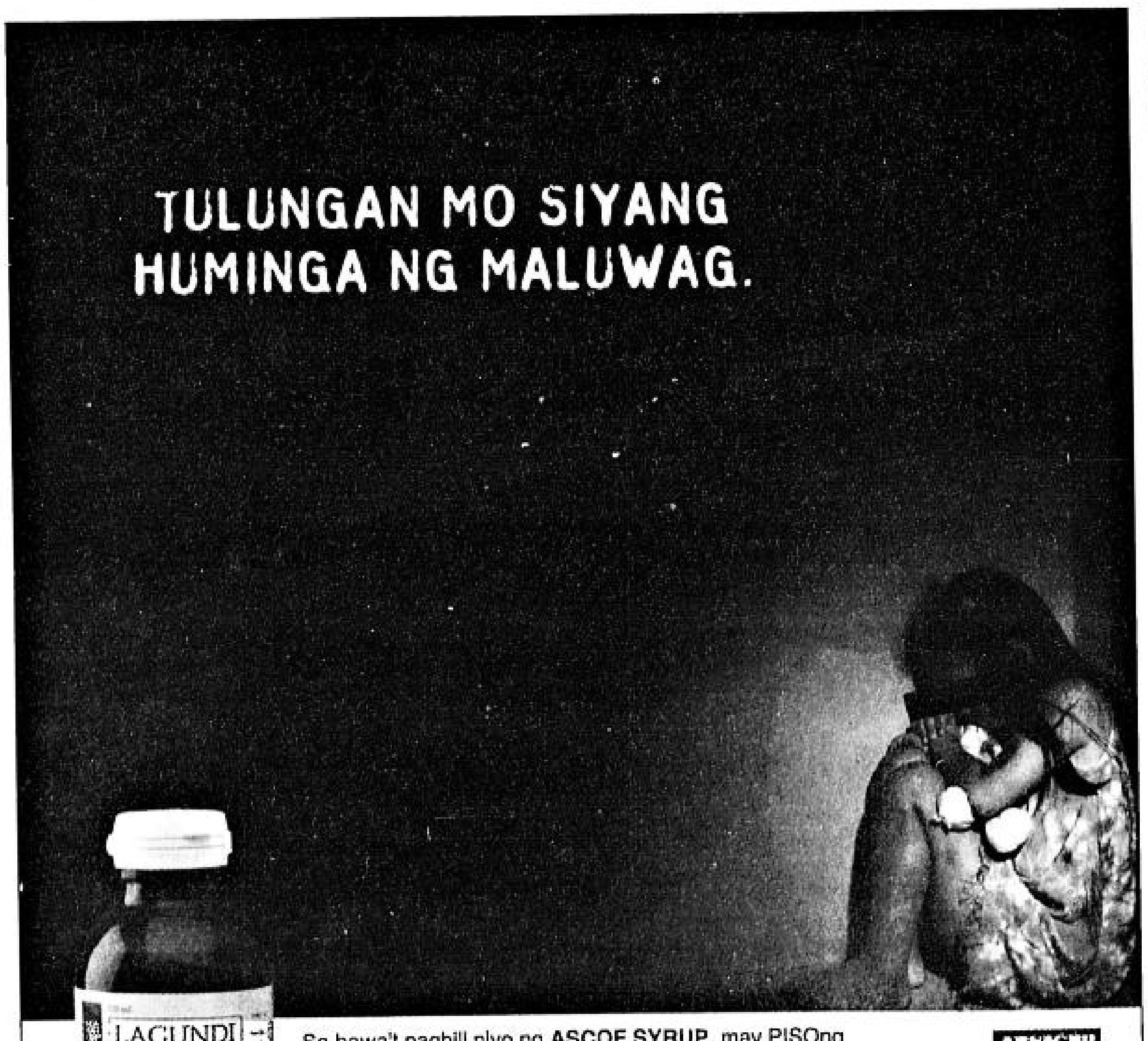

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Transport groups, LTFRB head patch up differences

WELCOME SUPPORT
Vivienne Tan, president of Thames International Business School, tries out a new computer at the National Bureau of Investigation's Computer Forensics Laboratory. The new facility, which was inaugurated recently, will be used to combat cyber crimes. Thames has thrown its full support to the campaign. Also in photo are NBI director Reynaldo Wycoco and Micheal Alcorn of the US State Department Anti-terrorism program.

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

NOT ONLY have the transport groups postponed their scheduled nationwide strike today.

They have also mellowed down in their call for the resignation of Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board Chair Ma. Elena Bautista.

"*Bati na kami* (We are now in good terms)," Pagkakaisa ng mga Samahan ng Tsuper at Opereytor Nationwide honorary chair Medardo Roda told the INQUIRER yesterday. Roda had led other transport leaders in demanding the ouster of Bautista.

But he said that they would still watch Bautista's actions and they would not hesitate to demand her resignation if she did "something wrong again."

Bautista said the other day that she had patched things up with the transport group leaders during a dialogue on Friday.

The transport groups decided in that dialogue not to push through with their planned strike today.

The LTFRB also promised to come up with a decision on the drivers' petition for a P1 provisional fare increase by March 16.

But for the ceasefire to last, Bautista should change her attitude, PCDO-ACTO president Efren De Luna told the INQUIRER.

Aside from looking into the drivers' petition for a fare increase, the government had also promised a P1 discount per liter of diesel for jeepney drivers in selected areas nationwide.

As of Saturday, at least 110 gasoline stations (50 Petron, 50 Shell and 10 Caltex) have agreed to implement the discount on diesel.

But De Luna said if the government was sincere in fulfilling its promise to the drivers, the discounted rate should be available in all stations in the country.

The National Transport Workers Union also demanded that the discount be implemented for the price of gasoline, the fuel used by thousands of tricycle and motorcab drivers in the country.

Roda added they were not yet abandoning their plan of holding a nationwide strike. He said the future actions they would take would depend on the LTFRB's decision on the drivers' provisional fare increase petition.

ARNEL Lazaro (with yellow hair) and another clown delight a child in one of their shows.

His comic face hides a tale of hope and faith

By Mary Jocelyn Uy

THE USUAL belief that behind a clown's mask lies a sad face and hard life best typifies this clown's life.

Arnel Lazaro, 30, has been making people, especially children, laugh since 1998. But beyond the happy face he puts on lies a tale of hardship and sacrifice to give his family a good life.

Lazaro, 30, is gifted with two identities. He is Ernie to his family and friends, but Tito Potpot the Clown to children.

When he is not his real self, his hair is a mass of yellow yarn and his face, highlighted by a big red nose, is heavily covered by a fancy and happy makeup. Gone are his usual loose shirt and pants because he wears a psychedelic suit that jives with his happy banters, magic tricks and jokes.

No fulfillment

Lazaro wore his first clown suit six years ago when he no longer found fulfillment being a lineman in Quezon province.

Possessed by the vibrancy of his youth, he wandered and looked for other promising jobs in Manila. His quest ended when he bumped into a friend who asked him if he wanted to try clowning for a while. He agreed.

His first stint as a clown fared well, but it was not after six months later that he got to do another clowning act. He used the time to undergo training as a clown.

He first worked as a clown for Nene's Clown, a small-time clowning business in Tondo. Two years later, he transferred to Beb's Toys and Balloons and has since stayed there.

"In the past, they only hired clowns from Nene's, and I was one of the perennial clowns they hired. Sometimes they would also get me to train their new employees here (Beb's Toys and Balloons). They must have really liked my work, so they offered me a permanent job here and I accepted it," Lazaro explained.

For Lazaro, clowning is just a twist of fate. Although he is constantly clad in a colorful suit and often found in a cheerful environment, he still thinks of himself as an ordinary man sweltering under the heat of the sun, applying the course he took up in college.

He was an electrical engineering student at New Era University, but did not finish his studies due to poverty.

Three jobs

He juggled two to three jobs while he was studying in college just to pay for his tuition.

In the morning, he was a messenger. In the afternoon he was a student and at night, he was a pedicab driver and a construction worker. But after a year, he gave up his job as a messenger.

"I couldn't afford to be late for my classes anymore," he said. But then, he also failed to finish his studies.

But this unfortunate fate only made him strive harder. He vowed not to let poverty keep his daughter, 2-year-old Lalaine, from finishing school.

"This year, I will be saving up for her education. It would be good if she will be given an early education," he related.

Plans

Lazaro has many plans for his daughter and his wife, Allen. He told the INQUIRER that aside from the education he aspires for his daughter, he would work hard to provide his family a home.

But as for now, while waiting for all his dreams to come true, his show goes on.

He continues to entertain children and even adults with his funny antics and enchant them with his quick hands in doing magic tricks and twisting balloons into curly shapes.

"In time, I could also start my own clowning business," he said with a tinge of excitement in his voice.

Gabriela talks tough vs 'kinse anyos' ad

MILITANT women's group Gabriela is talking tough against what it described as an "offensive" brandy advertisement.

Gabriela secretary general Cristina Palabay yesterday urged the maker of Napoleon brandy to pull out its "Kinse Anyos" radio commercials and billboards.

Palabay said that if the brandy company fails to do so by today, Gabriela would initiate a boycott against Napoleon Brandy.

She said they would also remove the billboards of the controversial ad themselves.

On March 3, the Advertising Board of the Philippines ordered the Sinson Lascano Group, which handles the brandy's advertising campaign, to pull out the Napoleon Brandy "Kinse Anyos" commercial and billboards.

But Gabriela officials said the company continued ignoring the order. Big billboards of the brandy, carrying the tag-line "Nakatikim Ka Na Ba ng Kinse Anyos?" can still be seen along Epifanio Delos Santos Avenue.

The tagline refers to the 15-year-old Napoleon Brandy—their product is stored in oak barrels for a much longer time than other liquor products. Liquors are said to taste better if they are stored longer.

But the group complained that the campaign had a double meaning, suggesting men's preference for 15-year-old girls.

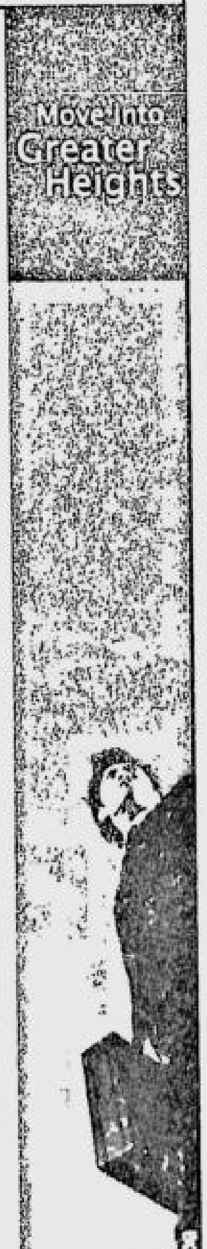
Gabriela had earlier wrote an open letter to the Adboard to express objection to the advertising campaign, saying it was "offensive and degrading to women."

The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women and the Movie Television Review and Classification Board have also expressed opposition to the brandy commercial.

Yesterday afternoon, members of different women's groups joined a five-kilometer march from Sto. Domingo Church to the Quezon City Hall. The groups were pushing for the protection of women's reproductive health.

Women Health Care Foundation executive director Dr. Florence Tagiar told the INQUIRER that women should be given the right to decide when to have sex and have children without subjecting them to violence or discrimination. She added that there should be laws to protect the rights of women.

Today, several women's groups will also stage rallies to commemorate the International Women's Day. In Manila, more than 10,000 members of Gabriela and Sanlakas are expected to hold a rally in Mendiola. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*



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Librarians from Asean set meet

THE CONGRESS of Southeast Asian Librarians XIII Executive Board Members from 10 Asean member-countries will hold its first meeting on March 28-30 at Richmonde Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

Lawyer Antonio Santos of the UP College of Law Library, overall chairperson of the organizing committee, said the annual meeting is in preparation for the Consal general conference in Manila in 2006.

Consal was established in 1970 in response to a growing sense of Southeast Asian identity among librarians and information professionals.

Barriers set up on Edsa-Ayala to keep buses in their lanes

By Margaux Ortiz

BARRIERS have been installed on Edsa-Ayala to keep city buses in their proper lanes and enable smoother flow of traffic in the area.

Metro Manila Development Authority Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Vergel de Dios said the barricades separate the first two lanes for exclusive use by buses.

Vergel de Dios said the first lane would be for Baclaran-FTI buses and the second lane would be for Alabang-Pacita buses. All other vehicles will be made to use the remaining three lanes.

He assured the public that there will be 100 percent improvement in traffic flow in the area once the scheme is in place.

He said bus drivers used to occupy three to four lanes while parking their vehicles perpendicularly to the sidewalk.

"Now, all the five lanes in the area will be utilized," Vergel de Dios emphasized.

The traffic chief said they would soon put up similar barriers in Edsa-Pioneer Street in Mandaluyong City.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando had said that the timers in supervised loading zones such as Magallanes and Ayala are adjusted according to the volume of buses at a given time.

The more buses lined up, the lesser time will be allotted on the 30-second timer to enable the faster flow of traffic in the area, he said.

The yellow light near the timer signals the drivers to start loading and unloading passengers in the specified bay. After 30 seconds, the light turns red, signaling the drivers to clear the area.

Fernando said "leading" buses that continue to load passengers and stall the other buses behind will be apprehended and punished with fines and suspension.

Creative diplomacy brings OFW home

By Volt Contreras

THANKS to the "creative" diplomacy exerted by this ambassador with a Waray's never-say-die spirit, an overseas Filipino worker convicted in Papua New Guinea got a respite from harsh prison life and was allowed to return home for an urgent eye treatment.

The feat was achieved in December 2002, but has since set an example of how diplomats can effectively come to the aid Filipinos facing legal problems abroad without incurring the ire of host governments for interfering with their internal affairs.

To convince a PNG court to temporarily release the Filipino prisoner for humanitarian reasons, Ambassador Bien Tejano reminded justice officials how he helped 36 Papua New Guineans flee the 2001 civil war in the neighboring Solomon Islands by letting them board the Philippine rescue plane.

'Innocent'

This was after Tejano's earlier tack failed to sway the judge who, in October 2002, convicted "Raymund," an officer in a PNG-based construction company who was charged with "bribing" a tax official.

At the request of Raymund's wife, who fears that the publicity might traumatize their young children, the paper is withholding his real identity and other details about his family and company.

But this she wants to come out loud and clear: "My husband was innocent." Raymund, she stressed, was "only asked by his boss" to deliver the money.

Tejano, meanwhile, clarified outright that he fully respected the PNG court's ruling. What he found "too much," however, was the penalty.

The supposed bribe, he said, was only the equivalent of "about P5,000"—and yet it earned Raymund a "four-year prison sentence with hard labor."

Gamble

During out-of-court talks on Raymund's request for a medical furlough, Tejano recalled, he laid his reputation and career on the line by guaranteeing the prisoner's return to the PNG jail once the eye treatment in Manila was completed.

But when this first move failed, "I became quite emotional and offered myself to be in his place in jail until he has recovered," Tejano told the INQUIRER.

TEJANO

"Again it was rejected because (PNG officials) said I enjoy immunity as an ambassador. But then I told them I was willing to waive my immunity and put that in writing," he said.

Tejano surmised that PNG officials finally "softened up" when he recounted how "I rescued" their compatriots during the frantic airlift of foreigners caught in the Solomon Islands conflict.

"I reminded them that when there was a war over there, I took along 36 Papua New Guineans when (the Philippine government) were repatriating 57 Filipinos. Their own ambassador appealed to me at the airport whether I can let his countrymen board our Air Force plane."

Creative

The envoy said he had "no second thought" about letting the Papua New Guineans in even though there was "not enough time to seek permission" from then president Estrada.

The Papua New Guinea government, in fact, later accorded him "recognition for that rescue," said Tejano, an Estrada appointee in the diplomatic corps who was among those retained by the Macapagal administration.

Fellow Ambassador Roy Señeres, who was present during the interview, described his peer's deed as a "creative way of helping OFWs in distress through diplomacy."

Under the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, diplomats are "prohibited from interfering with the local processes of the host country," said Señeres, who now chairs of the National Labor Relations Commission.

"So he actually walked a tightrope there, because he was almost interfering but still did not antagonize the host country," said Señeres, who himself has been credited for successfully handling the celebrated repatriation case of Sarah Balabagan, a Muslim OFW convicted of killing her employee who tried to rape her.

Tejano risked being declared a persona non-grata by the PNG government, but this never happened "because, in the first place, he had a reservoir of goodwill with the host country," he said, alluding to Tejano's rescue tale.

"But perhaps it's just my Waray side that made me that persistent," Tejano, a native of Mapanas, Northern Samar, smiled. Before his appointment to the foreign service, he served as chair of the Dangerous Drugs Board during the Ramos administration.

Too late

Tejano, then posted at the Philippine embassy in the PNG capital Port Moresby, said he was approached for help by Raymund's wife when the latter was already convicted and "it was already too late."

Raymund spent about a month in prison before his deteriorating eye problem, which was diagnosed months earlier, forced him to seek the help of specialists, including a laser surgeon, who were not available in PNG. That's when Tejano began "negotiating" for his treatment in the Philippines.

The ambassador said he was doubly driven to help Raymund because "the allegations against the man were not that serious for him to suffer like that."

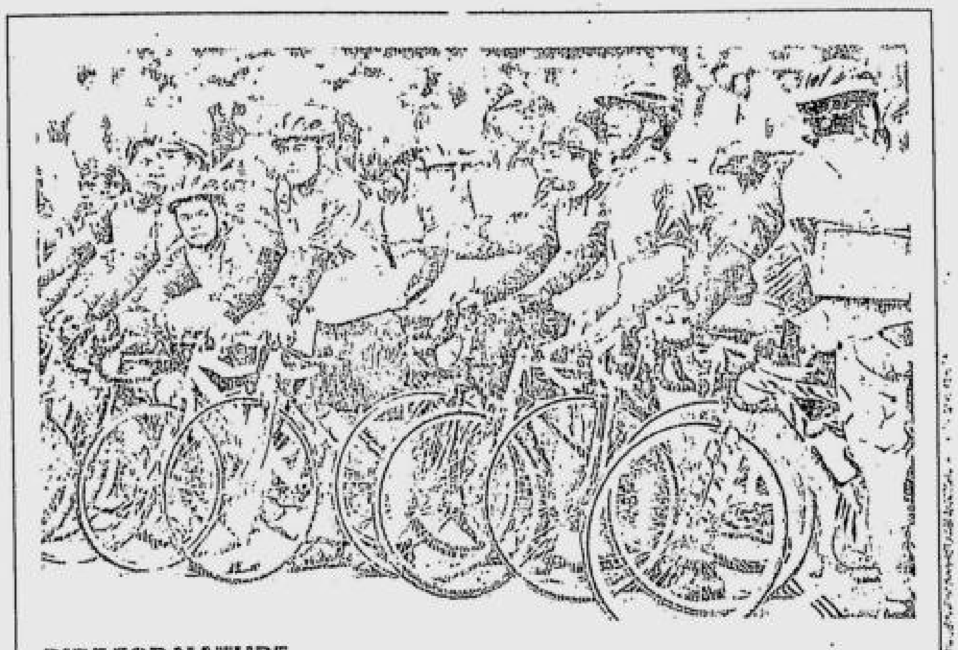
Escorted by a Papua New Guinean police officer, Raymund returned to the country on Dec. 31, 2002. He has since been in and out of hospital while savoring his provisional liberty with his family.

Promise of return

Tejano said he had personally guaranteed the PNG court that Raymund would return to serve out the rest of his sentence "once he has fully recovered."

President Macapagal-Arroyo, however, "recently instructed me to further negotiate with the (PNG) government, whether it could eventually grant him absolute pardon for humanitarian reasons," he added.

He now faces these new challenges with optimism, banking on the improved relations between the two countries.



RIDE FOR NATURE
Participants of the Kalikasan Fun Bike wait for the starting gun that will take them through a 50-kilometer course through Manila and Quezon City. Sunday's event, organized by APL Events, sought to raise awareness for the protection of the environment. RUDY ESPERAS

Makati diphtheria cases contained

By Margaux Ortiz

THE RASH of diphtheria cases in Makati City has been contained over the weekend, according to city government and health officials.

Mayor Jejomar Binay yesterday said mass vaccinations conducted in Barangay West Rembo, where two children died of the highly contagious disease last week, had placed the spread of the disease under control.

"We have made sure that the residents of West Rembo are aware of the seriousness of the disease through public awareness campaigns and compulsory vaccinations," Binay said.

John Michael Geno, 4, and Justin Geno, 9 months old, of Sitio 8, West Rembo, succumbed to diphtheria last week, while their brother Jejomar, 9, is now recovering at the San Lazaro Hospital.

According to Sitio 8 zone leader Rogelio Carbonell, 75 percent of the residents in his area were vaccinated on Saturday.

Carbonell asked the 15 families living in Trinanes Compound, where the Geno family resides, not to make close contact with neighbors.

"I told them to avoid going out of their compound during their two-month observation period," Carbonell said.

West Rembo chairperson Theresa De Lara said West Rembo and Fort Bonifacio Elementary Schools would be assessed for the disease.

Herminia dela Cruz

HERMINIA "Minyang" dela Cruz died on March 4 due to a lingering illness.

Her body now lies in state at the house of her daughter, Maridee, at 20 A. Leongson St., San Roque, Navotas.

Interment will be on March 10 at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park.

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SALE GOES BUST

Woman yields illegal drugs

By Tarra Quismundo

THE SHUTTERED Metropolitan Theater in Plaza Lawton, Manila, was the site of a bad performance Saturday night that may lead to a lifetime in jail for a 24-year-old woman.

The role of Sarah Akmad, 24, of Maharlika Village, Taguig, was to deliver 19 grams of shabu to a small-time drug peddler in Manila.

She bungled her part, however, when instead of handing the drugs to her contact, she gave it to undercover lawmen at about 6:30 p.m.

The police said that an informant had told them that Akmad was going to deliver drugs to a client that night.

Persistence pays off for pageant winners

From page A24

GMA 7 newscaster Rhea Santos, saying she would work on improving education in the country if given the chance to lead.

"Education is the key to this country's success. I will pass a bill that would give equal... and nice education to children," said Balagtas, who also won the Best in Swimsuit title.

Included in this year's 10 finalists were Honeylet Gascon and Gemma Gatdula, who both finished fifth in their respective batches at the Miss Philippines-Earth pageant. Other finalists were Christy del Rosario, Liwayway Baterna and Margaux Mitz Flores.

1999 Miss Universe first runner-up Miriam Quiambao, Dingdong Dantes and Ariel Rivera hosted the show.

The show paid tribute to the modern Filipina, executive producer Ali Nocum told the INQUIRER in an earlier interview.

This year's guest performers were R&B singer Jay-R and the Whiplash Dancers.

Candidate Jeanne Harn won the Miss Talent title, while Stephanie Anne Balagtas bagged the Miss Friendship award.

Bayot was heralded Miss Lux Super Rich that night, while Balagtas won the Miss Philippine Airlines and Miss Internet awards.

Tiongson brought home the Miss Avon Color award, while Javelona, the Miss Close-Up Smile award.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, March 8, 2004
2nd Week of Lent

1st Reading: Dan 9:4-10
Gospel: Lk 6:36-38

Jesus said to his disciples, "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

"Don't be a judge of others and you will not be judged; do not condemn and you will not be condemned; forgive and you will be forgiven; give and it will be given to you, and you will receive in your sack good measure, pressed down, full and running over. For the measure you give will be the measure you receive back."

Commentary

People have preached the most merciless sermons about mercy, "If we refuse mercy here, we shall have justice in eternity." And the most heretical, "A God who is all mercy is an unjust God." And the most stupid, "Mercy is not for them that sin and fear not, but for them that fear and sin not." It makes you long to hear the words of someone who suffered and therefore knew something about mercy:

I say that we are wound
With mercy round and round
As if with air. (G.M. Hopkins)

Yet isn't there some kind of condition built into the phrases of today's reading? "Judge not and you will not be judged." "Forgive and you will be forgiven." "The measure you give is the measure you will get." Don't these phrases suggest that if you do judge you will be judged; if you refuse to forgive you will be refused forgiveness; and that God is only as merciful as you are? How are we to understand this?

If you cannot give you cannot receive either. The measure you give is the measure you are capable of receiving. A saint would give you his or her life, but a louse can only give you the itch. "With every creature, according to the nobility of its nature, the more it indwells in itself, the more it gives itself out," wrote Meister Eckhart. If I refuse to give (or forgive), this shows that I have not entered into the human and divine mystery of what we are. God does not limit his mercy; we do.

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

Janjalani: From ASG to BCJ

By Christian Esguerra

HE MIGHT have been feared as a dreaded terrorist but Abu Sayyaf leader Hector, Janjalani had to shed off his ferocious image when brought to the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa late last week.

A meek Janjalani entered an isolated cell in Building 1-B Saturday night to begin his life sentence for the kidnapping of American Jeffrey Schilling in 2000, an NBP insider told the INQUIRER.

The cell, according to the source, is at the facility housing death convicts.

Since Janjalani was a newcomer, he had to "bow down" before leaders of the Batang City Jail, a jailhouse gang that "rules" that part of the national penitentiary, the source said.

"*Di uubra ang pagiging terorista n'ya rito* (His being a terrorist will not work here)," he said, hinting that Janjalani might even have been forced to join the BCJ.

He said the Abu leader had no choice but to join the group, if only to "survive" there.

But Janjalani was not so humble when he first arrived at the penitentiary.

Bureau of Corrections Director Dionisio Santiago said some inmates and prison employees were irked when Janjalani entered the building with his hands on his waist.

"*Medyo nayabangan sila*," he told the INQUIRER. "But there's no room for his notoriety here. Inmates themselves will clip his wings."

And his "wings" seemed fairly trimmed when he was brought to the enclave of the prison hardened BCJs.

The group Batang Mindanao could have been willing to adopt Janjalani but the gang did not have members on death row.

And if it's any consolation, Janjalani came at the time when there's relative peace at the NBP.

ABU SAYYAF leader Hector Janjalani confers with his lawyer, Fidel Macauyag, in this file photo before his trial for kidnapping.

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Persistence pays off for pageant winners

By Marinel Cruz

CAREER pageant contestants Maricar Balagtas, Mary Ann Bayot and Ma. Karla Bautista, dominated last Saturday's Binibining Pilipinas beauty search, proving that trying and trying can lead to success.

Balagtas was crowned Bb. Pilipinas Universe in last Saturday's pageant at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao, Quezon City. Bayot won the Bb. Pilipinas International title, while Bautista copped the Bb. Pilipinas World title.

All three candidates had competed, and won, in other national and international pageants in the past.

Third time

"This is my third time to join the Binibining Pilipinas," Balagtas told the INQUIRER shortly after the ceremony.

Balagtas was 17 when she first made it to the pageant, and 19 the second time. "I hope to bring home the Miss Universe crown this time," added the professional model from Bulacan.

"I wasn't disheartened by losing," she said. "I was very young and naïve then. It doesn't matter how many times you fall. What matters is how well you stand after that fall."

Balagtas, 21, won the Bb. Pilipinas second runner-up title in 2001 and was crowned Miss Globe 2001 in Turkey.

Ready

"I really prepared for this one," said Bayot. "The pressure in on because this is my second time. I made sure that I was at my very best. All the hard work paid off."

Bayot, 21, was last year's Bb. Pilipinas first runner-up. She eventually landed second in the Miss Internet WWW search in Turkey.

BALAGTAS: Pay off

Bautista, 19, is a first-time contestant in Bb. Pilipinas. She, however, is the reigning Miss Cebu. She also won this year's Best in Long Gown title.

She said she was very happy that she won over "more experienced" candidates. "I was so nervous," she said. "I didn't know what to think. It was tough out there."

Crucial question

Candidate No. 1 Princess Jasmine Tiongson won the second runner-up title, while Tracy Ann Javelona, candidate No. 20, was proclaimed first runner-up.

Balagtas earned the judges' nod when she confidently answered a crucial question by

PERSISTENCE/ A23

Tanong ng Bayan
INQ TV
Ngayong Alas-10 Ng Gabi

Kaso ni FPJ:
Napulitika ba ang Korte Suprema?

Ang sagot nina Conrado de Quiros, petitioner Atty. Victorino Fornier, atbp: Ngayong gabi, sa INQTV on ABC. Pagkatapos, susundan ng exclusive interview kay Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Minita Chico Nazario. Dito lang sa INQTV on ABC.

ABC

5 boys drown in canal

FOUR children and a teenager drowned in an irrigation canal in Barangay Tabang, Guiguinto, Bulacan, on Saturday afternoon.

The police said the children, all boys aged 9 to 11, went for a swim at the canal in Sitio Prenza at about 1 p.m. but the water was too deep.

A 19-year-old companion tried to save them but he also drowned.

They were carried off by strong current.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

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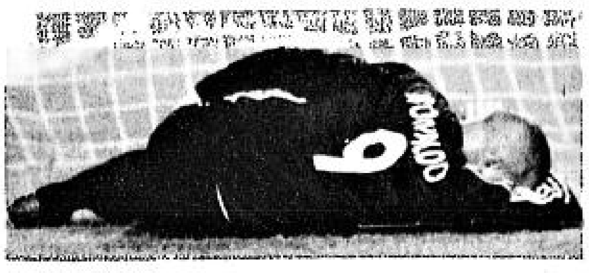

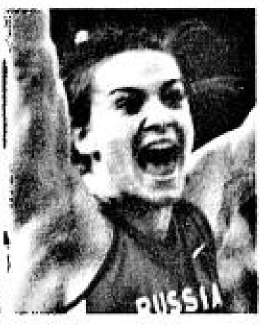

WHAT'S INSIDE

- 'Schu' leads hot Ferrari charge in Australian Prix /A26
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- Ronaldo's thigh injury hampers Real Madrid bid /A32
- Russians crack world marks /A32

Cortez triple rescues Aces, dooms Hotdogs

By June Navarro

MIKE Cortez drained a three-pointer with 48 seconds left to lift Alaska to a 91-89 squeaker over Purefoods last night in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

With the shotclock winding down and the game on the line, the 6-foot Cortez let fly a triple over the outstretched arms of rookie Paul Artadi that swished the net, silencing the pro-Purefoods crowd and pulling the Aces out of impending disaster.

"I didn't hesitate to take the shot. I got a good look at the basket, unleashed the shot and luckily it fell in," said Cortez as the Aces bounced back from an 86-83 loss to the Coca-Cola Tigers last Wednesday.

In the second game, the Tigers staved off Sta. Lucia Realty's final-quarter rally to post a 95-89 victory and notch its second win in three games. The Realtors fell to 0-3.

The Aces improved to 2-1, while handing the TJ Hotdogs their third straight defeat in four games despite getting superb efforts from James Yap and Richard Yee.

Yee picked up where Jun Limpot had left off, banging in 10 of his 12 points in the final period while Yap hit the crucial baskets that gave the TJ Hotdogs an 87-81 spread entering the final two minutes.

Limpot hurt his left ankle while going for a steal and was plucked out of the game with a minute left in the third quarter.

Yee took over and ignited a blistering run that wiped out an 81-77 Alaska lead.

Rob Duat broke the four-minute scoreless spell of the Aces to set the stage for Cortez's game-winner.

Alaska's Galen Young, who banged in 34 points, fouled out with 3:27 left while Reggie Butler committed his last foul off a driving Ali Peek midway in the fourth quarter.

"The game was beautiful for the fans but horrible for the coaching staff. The referees were whistle-happy. It was a freethrow-shooting contest out there and it's not good for the game. It destroyed the flow of the game," said Alaska coach Tim Cone.

Brandon Cablay scored 10 points, including a triple that trimmed the gap, 87-86, with less than two minutes left.

"We've been encouraging Mike to be aggressive with his shots and he's responding pretty well," said Cone.

The scores:

First Game

ALASKA 91—Young 34, Cortez 12, Peek 12, Cablay 10, Allado 7, Duat 6, Thoss 5, Feihl 5, Wilson 0.

PUREFOODS 89—Limpot 17, Castillo 17, Yee 12, Yap 11, Butler 11, Artadi 9, Raymundo 6, Johnson 4, Evangelista 2, Simon 0, Sotto 0, Patrimonio 0.

Quarters: 24-18, 49-37, 72-65, 91-89.

Second Game

COCA-COLA 95—Sanford 30, David 14, Antonio 14, Hawkins 10, Morano 10, Hugnatan 6, Reavis 5, Wainwright 4, Abarrientos 2, Avenido 0, Lao 0.

STA. LUCIA 89—Wilson 22, Santos 13, Espino 12, Aquino 10, Gonzales 10, Adriano 8, Mendoza 8, Omolon 4, Locsin 2, Cuan 0, Victolero 0, Ong 0.

Quarters: 29-15. 59-31, 85-62, 95-89

REGGIE Butler of Purefoods harasses a driving Galen Young of Alaska in the final quarter of last night's game. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

NCR XI rips Laguna, grabs national title

THE NATIONAL Capital Region-Philippine Air Force squad blasted Laguna, 4-1, to win the 2004 SuperFerry National football championship at the University of Santo Tomas pitch last Saturday.

Laguna, the surprise finalist, scored first after only 10 minutes of play through Adonis Torres, before the NCR-PAF combine responded with a four-goal blitz led by Yanti Barsales, who broke through two times.

Barsales tied the game in the 65th minute, Raymond Tonog broke the deadlock on the 71st and two minutes later Barsales struck again for a 3-1 lead. Randy Bela-ong completed scoring for the champions in the 82nd.

Negros Occidental earlier beat Cebu in a shootout, 5-4, to clinch third place.

Philippine Football Federation president Johnny Romualdez led top officials who graced the finals.

Among the special guests were IOC representative to the Philippines Frank Elizalde, WG&A's Senior PR Judd Salas, Gen. Romeo Alamillo of the PAF, Laguna Football president Edward Magallona, NCRFA president Santi Elizalde and VP Capt. Arnel Fernandez.

Blue off to fine start in PDI tilt

TOURNAMENT favorite Blue team got off to a rousing start after routing the Greens, 83-68, last Saturday in the Philippine Daily Inquirer basketball tournament at the Olympia Gym in Makati City.

Sportswriter June Navarro and photographer Jim Guiao Punzalan combined for 49 points while Erik Arazas added 18. Blue, which missed the services of power forward Edwin Villanueva and INQUIRER Libre sports editor Dennis Eroa, dealt Green its first defeat after beating Black during the opener.

In the second game, Genie Lagman scored 17 points and Gilbert Rago added 14 as White team trounced Yellow team, 74-57, to register its first victory after an opening-day loss to Red team. Yellow team, led by Zaldy Templonuevo's 20 points, absorbed its first defeat.

Hugh Jaymalin banged in 21 points and Sonny Cruz had 18 to lead Red team to a 57-54 win over Black team in the third game. Red improved to 2-0 while Black dropped to its second straight setback.

BLUE/ A26

WOODS plays a shot from the third fairway. REUTERS

DUBAI OPEN

O'Meara ties for lead with 68; Tiger 6 adrift

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates—Tiger Woods is being upstaged in the Dubai Desert Classic by his Florida neighbor Mark O'Meara, who hasn't won an official tour event since claiming the '98 British Open.

O'Meara shot a 4-under-par 68 Saturday to share the third-round lead with Irish playing partner Paul McGinley. McGinley shot a 69.

Englishman Brian Davis was three strokes off the lead after a 69. Fellow countrymen Simon Dyson and Paul Casey and Welshman Bradley Dredge were five back. Dyson and Casey shot 70 and Dredge, the first-round leader, had a 72.

Woods, who agreed to play in the tournament for US$3 million in appearance money, shot 69 to trail by six, trying to win two weeks in a row after claiming the WGC event in California.

"Tiger just won US$1.2 million and I missed the last two cuts," O'Meara said. "I'm 200th in the world ranking and he's No. 1. I don't think Tiger Woods is too scared of me."

O'Meara won the Masters and British Open back-to-back in 1998, and then defeated Woods in the final of the World Match Play at Wentworth outside London later in the year. Since then, success has been scant.

Now he's experiencing a putting revival with a new "saw grip," which involves putting his right hand—bottom hand—on the club cradled between his thumb and three rigid fingers.

He rolled in five on Saturday but missed a makable putt on 18, which came just seconds after McGinley chipped in from 25 feet to pull level.

"I think on the last hole the chain saw ran out of gas. It stopped cutting," O'Meara said.

Asked when he last led or shared the lead after 54 holes, he rolled his eyes. "I don't know the last time," he said. "It's been a while."

O'Meara is expecting a typical Woods' charge on Sunday, although it could come from any of 23 players within nine strokes of the lead. Among them are Lee Westwood, Colin Montgomerie, Ernie Els and Padraig Harrington

"I can't focus on Tiger Woods," O'Meara said. "I know he's not playing the way he wants to. But certainly I wouldn't put it past him to come out and make a run tomorrow. That's his style."

"But I think he's going to have to shoot a very low score tomorrow."

Despite three days of delays by early morning fog, the entire field finished the third round with McGinley, O'Meara and first-round leader Dredge coming in at dusk at the Emirates Golf Club.

Like O'Meara, Woods also ran in five birdies. He drove left into a sandy wasteland off the fairway. Legs against a growth of scrub, he guided a 6 iron around a few palm trees to the back of the green—and then holed a 50 footer for birdie.

It was one of the few times the quiet, respectful crowds chatted: "Tiger, Tiger." *AP*

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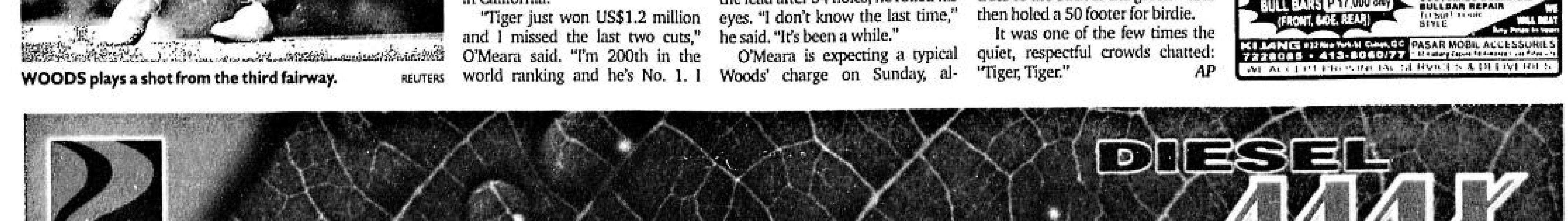
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CHAMPS' SHOWDOWN

Tamaraws battle Knights for finals slot

GAME TODAY *(San Beda Gym)*
5:30 p.m.—La Salle vs Adamson
GAME TOMORROW *(San Beda Gym)*
4 p.m.—FEU vs Letran

REIGNING UAAP champion Far Eastern U Tamaraws downed the UP Maroons, 72-69, while La Salle's Green Archers walked over Philippine Christian University to gain semifinal slots in the Red Bull-sponsored Lito Puyat Cup basketball tournament at the FEU gym.

Jonas Villanueva and Jeff Chan knocked in crucial baskets in the closing minutes of the final quarter to power the Tamaraws to victory.

Villanueva finished with 18 points while Chan added 14. The Maroons were led by Toti Almeda and Marvin Cruz with 17 and 10 points, respectively.

The Green Archers face the Adamson University Falcons at 5:30 p.m. today at the FEU gym in one of the knockout semifinal contests of the tournament organized by Micaba's Cenon "Pipay" Buenaventura and sponsored by Red Bull and Agfa Color.

The Tamaraws meet reigning NCAA champion Letran Knights at 4 p.m. tomorrow at the San Beda gym in the other semifinal match.

The winners will dispute the Lito Puyat Cup donated by former two-time Fiba (international basketball federation) president and long-time Basketball Association of the Philippines head Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat II.

BADMINTON BEAUTY: Former beauty queen Gem Padilla makes a forehand service return during a celebrity match in the Whisper-Summer's Eve Badminton Cup at the Yonex courts in Mandaluyong City. The two-day tournament which ended yesterday drew more than 100 players.

'Schu' leads hot Ferrari charge in Australian Prix

MELBOURNE, Australia—Six-time world champion Michael Schumacher won his fourth Australian Grand Prix title Sunday, pacing teammate Rubens Barrichello to a 1-2 finish and a probable preview of another Ferrari season domination of Formula One.

Schumacher led from pole position to finish and completed 58 laps of the Albert Park circuit in 1 hour, 24 minutes and 15.757 seconds, 13.6 seconds clear of Barrichello and the fastest time in the history of the event.

He lowered the lap record around the 5.303-kilometer (3.295 mile) Albert Park circuit in the 29th lap, when he clocked 1 minute, 24.125 seconds.

By that time, the race—even between the Ferraris—was virtually over. Barrichello had some trouble with his brakes and backed off the pace, and the challenge for the checkered flag.

Schumacher, bidding for a fifth consecutive F1 drivers' title, described his 71st Grand Prix win as just about the perfect race.

"It was a great opening race of the season for us," Schumacher said. "It was a tough one in the beginning, first half of the race, before Rubens faced some problems — it was a tough fight. It was very exciting.

"The car goes well, we have seen this all weekend. From a personal point of view, I go home with two more points than I had after the first three races last season."

In what seemed to be a separate race for third place among the remaining nine teams, Fernando Alonso earned his fifth podium finish and picked up six points for Renault.

He was 34.6 seconds behind Schumacher, who slowed down to his slowest laps close to the end after building up a margin of more than 30 seconds on his nearest rival.

"To be there on the podium, in front of Williams and McLaren, is a little prize for us," said Alonso. The order of the front three didn't change after the first turn of the race.

Williams pair Ralf Schumacher and Juan Pablo Montoya were fourth and fifth, more than one minute off the pace, while BAR-Honda's Jenson Button was sixth and collected three points.

David Coulthard, winner here in 2003, was eighth, one place behind Renault's Jarno Trulli, and gained a solitary point for McLaren. *AP*

Bridgestone
Marlboro

SCHUMACHER celebrates on the podium. Below, the winner tows teammate Barrichello and Alonzo to the finish. AFP

Shell karting series opens this weekend

THE SEARCH for the country's future racing superstars continues when the Shell Super Karting Series unveils its 2004 season this weekend, March 13-14, at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

BUMGARNER

Over 60 karters—veterans and newcomers alike—have confirmed their participation in the eight-leg series sanctioned by the governing Automobile Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, Bridgestone and Denso Iridium Power.

Up for grabs are titles in the Open Class, the Formula Rotax Max 125 Seniors, Formula Rotax Max 125 Juniors, Formula Rotax Novice, Formula SL Light, Formula SL Heavy and the Cadet 85 class for kids 8-11 years old.

Highlighting the series is the quest for the Karter of the Year and the Novice Karter of the Year awards.

Karting fans can also witness the exciting competition at the Kart Track–Enchanted Kingdom in Sta. Rosa Laguna on July 24-25 (4th leg), Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario, Batangas, on Aug. 28-29 (5th leg), the Kart Zone in Cebu City on Sept. 11-12 (6th leg), and at the Boomland, CCP Complex on Oct. 9-10 (7th leg).

Blue off to fine . . .

From page A25

First Game

BLUE 83—Navarro 25, Punzalan 24, Arazas 18, Delluta 6, Abad 6, Buno 4, Ambrosio 0, Labay 0.

GREEN 68—Gatdula 28, Cayabyab 19, Romanillos 8, Tablazon 5, Chanco 4, De Jesus 4 Resurrecion 0, Abing 0.

Halftime: 36-29

Second Game

WHITE 74-Lagman 17, Fua 16, Rago 14, Espinosa 8, Cuclo 8 Rubio 7, Navarro 4, Bacani 0.

YELLOW 57-Templonuevo 20, Badocdoc 9, Valencia 8, De Gracia 8, Nuyda 6, Ilagan 6.

Halftime: 35-25

Third Game

RED 57—Jaymalin 21, Cruz 18, Ruiz 9, Cagarra 4, Delgado 3, Rillera 2, Marasigan 0, Mortel 0, Lati 0, Frias 0.

BLACK 54—Delos Reyes 17, Mercado 12, Esperas 12, Macawile 9, Araneta 2, Licuanan 2, Roberto 0, Alejandrino 0, Sambo 0, Llantada 0.

Unbeaten Suico starts quest for WBC crown

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

CEBU CITY—The big fight may not come until next year, but undefeated World Boxing Council No. 2 junior lightweight Randy "Komong Bato" Suico officially started on Saturday the greatest quest of his career.

The hard-hitting Suico, unbeaten in 21 fights with 18 KOs, sparred at the renowned ALA Gym here in preparation for his big Maytime showdown with No. 1 Mzonke Fana for the right to challenge WBC champ Erik Morales.

The Mandaue City-raised Suico has been mandated by the Mexico-based WBC to face Fana (21-2, 8 KOs) in the final eliminator for the WBC throne, won last Sunday by Morales over compatriot Jesus Chavez.

"The WBC rules and regulations decreed that the champ must defend his title against the mandatory challenger once a year. The next mandatory may be on Feb. 24, 2005," revealed Suico's manager Joe Koizumi, anticipating a planned fall fight between WBC champ Morales and IBF titleholder Carlos Hernandez.

The Morales-Hernandez showdown is reportedly being planned by cable giant HBO in cooperation with Morales' promoter, Bob Arum.

In his last fight on March 30, the brick-fisted Suico did not waste time in disposing of Korean challenger Seung Won Baek in two rounds.

But less than two weeks later, Fana answered with a definitive sixth-round TKO over Christian Paz in South Africa.

The Suico-Fana showdown was originally slated in April, but had to be moved owing to South Africa's holding of the national elections next month.

What's sick, lacking at Barangay Ginebra

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

(**REMINDERS:** Ring Magazine editor Nigel Collins will present this morning to media at the Pantalan (Luneta) the special world championship belt that will later be awarded to Manny Pacquiao during special ceremonies at Malacañang.... From jazz genius Richard Merk: "Please don't forget the Tribute to the Beatles at Merk's Bar Bistro (Glorietta), featuring the Dynasouls, March 11 and 16.")

***

THERE were only two distinct factors that could have made you stay behind.

1. You were a San Miguel Beer team diehard.
2. You didn't like the popular Ginebra San Miguel squad.

Well, maybe there was none or, if ever, only very few Ginebra haters out there at the Philsports arena on Saturday.

However, many fans were seen forming a beeline for the exits with still over five minutes left in the main game.

You can bet those who wanted out quick were not trying to avoid the frantic rush to the parking lot.

Those people in a rush simply did not like what they were made to witness: the untimely flogging of the Ginebra squad.

***

Left practically senseless on the defensive end, Ginebra became the unwilling whipping boy of the San Miguel Beermen in last Saturday's PBA featured game.

In fairness to Ginebra, and hordes upon hordes of its irrepressible followers, it's not yet the end of the road for the team.

Barangay Ginebra doesn't give up that easy.

The disenchantment, for sure, is only temporary.

The Gin Kings, following their well-publicized manpower buildup, should be able to regroup and get back into the win-win groove.

In the first place, who's the Ginebra fan that wouldn't have been enticed by the Gin Kings' back-to-back wins in the Fiesta Conference?

Ginebra tripped Shell on opening day, before showing no mercy to a Purefoods squad that was forced to play without an import after having scored a sensational win over favored Coca-Cola.

***

Give Ginebra the chance to regroup, let it win at least a couple of games and watch fans run back to the coliseum.

Of course, one thing that lured them in early was this bold pre-tournament tout on the newfound might of Ginebra.

Listen. Maybe, as part of the PBA recovery script, Ginebra coach Allan Caidic was made to state well ahead of others that they should be able to have a good shot at the Fiesta championship.

Reason given was the more than ample manpower buildup, centering on the hiring of big Andy Seigle and the fulltime reinstatement of powerboy Eric Menk.

There was hardly any need to exploit the manpower edge in the opening match against the groping Shell Turbochargers.

In picking up win No. 2, Ginebra had a picnic and feasted on a Purefoods team that played crippled after its able American reinforcement was injured.

***

How Ginebra suddenly turned pitiful and helpless against San Miguel Beer was a testament to the toughness of the current conference.

The message: a team could be truly competitive only if it is able to make a solid, sensible stand on both ends of the court.

The imbalance in the new Ginebra set-up, defined by an anemic armory, was exploited to the hilt by the Beermen.

Well, it would've been less galling if the game were lost on breaks.

The sorry thing here was that the Beermen had to take pains in making some soft, brotherly adjustments in the homestretch. You know, to make the game interesting and keep the fans glued to their seats.

That could, indeed sound harsh, but let me assure that it was not meant to disparage the popular Ginebra squad.

***

There definitely was something missing in the team's old never-say-die chemistry.

In fact, a few Ginebra fans went home shaking their humbled heads, wondering if their favorite team ever managed to show up on the hardcourt against San Miguel.

Now, if the true Ginebra team is to again play to original expectations, everybody, from the coaching staff to the benchwarmers, would have to review and reconsider revising team philosophy.

Maybe it's also about time they listened to Sen. Robert Jaworski, who said that it won't help if a player works hard for a minute and takes it easy in the next two stretches.

If Ginebra's streak shooters could work on defense as mightily as they do with their field attempts, then half the affliction would be cured.

Ginebra could prevent future floggings only if it makes serious sacrifices and works its butt fighting off attackers.

No need to go back to the Big J to know that.

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has arrived.

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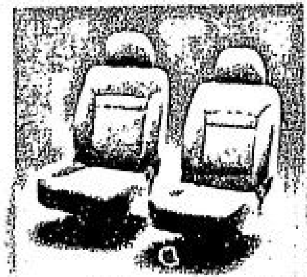
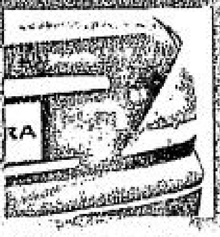
SMARTER.

Comfort Zone
Elegant interior is luxurious and functional, and yet youthful in spirit and ambience.



The Right Stuff
New cabin materials, cooler fabric and leather upholstery give the new Sentra even more ownership value.

SEXIER.



Body Beautiful
Refined exterior features smoother lines, new grill, rear fender, and bumper.

Sleek Chic
Re-designed head & tail lamps add to the Sentra's sophistication without sacrificing practicality.

Engineered with VTC technology

THREE 100,000 WARRANTY*

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Available in: 1.8L GT (A/T) • 1.6L GS (A/T) • 1.6L GSX (A/T, M/T) • 1.3L GX (A/T, M/T)

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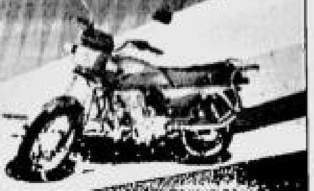

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3RD GRAND DRAW

(4) FIRST PRIZES TOYOTA Altis 1.6M/T

GMA

Rossana A. Cruz
28 A. Rod. Avenue Bgy. San Roque, Cainta, Rizal; 39 yrs. old

LUZON

Caroline C. Marco
Purok 7 Bo. Anislag, Daraga, Albay 4501; 30 yrs. old

VISAYAS

Eugenio T. Saballa
Brgy. Malibago, Babatngon, Leyte; 43 yrs. old

MINDANAO

Florma Muñez
1060 Kimaya Jasaan, Misamis Oriental 9003; 25 yrs. old

(8) SECOND PRIZES TOYOTA Revo DLX Diesel M/T

GMA

Al Francis C. Flores
38 Isla Rd., Valenzuela City; 28 yrs. old

Jake S. Angeles
41 Quirino St., Bo. Magsaysay, Tondo, Manila; 26 yrs. old

LUZON

Felino S. Gutierrez
68 Puzol St., Mayapyap Sur, Cabanatuan City; 48 yrs. old

Thelma B. Requio
San Jose, Bombon, Camarines Sur; 49 yrs. old

VISAYAS

Patrocenio G. Escalona
21 Paseo De Legaspi St., Tacloban City; 29 yrs. old

Lucas M. Evangelio
Capt. Sabi St., Talisay City, Negros Occidental 6115; 48 yrs. old

MINDANAO

Elmo Angeles
Priority Agency, 124 Quezon Ave., Cotabato City; 56 yrs. old

Elmer P. Bunkino
Purok 3, Lumbocun, Butuan City; 19 yrs. old

(16) THIRD PRIZES Falcon Motorcycle 150cc

GMA

Jeffrey O. Torres
90 A. Bonifacio St., Sta. Lucia, San Juan, MM; 31 yrs. old

Ma. Theresa Ibarra
1910 P.Margal St., Sampaloc, Manila; 24 yrs. old

Jocelyn V. Ido
1194 Medina St., Bo. Bitik, Gen. T. De Leon, Valenzuela City; 31 yrs. old

Rey F. Faminialagao
79 Molave St., Proj. 3, QC; 43 yrs. old

LUZON

Gilbert Paje
Macalaya, Castilla, Sorsogon; 64 yrs. old

Merle O. Oco
P-5 Banao, Guinobatan, Albay 4503; 34 yrs. old

Editha I. Dela Cruz
Brgy. Bicos, Pantok Rizal, Nueva Ecija; 22 yrs. old

Maria San Pedro
149 Barlis, Cabanatuan City; 62 yrs. old

VISAYAS

Josefa S. Halique
R.V. Sanchez St., Brgy. 11, San Miguel, Iloilo; 48 yrs. old

Zenaida Del Carmen
Simeon Aguilar St., Passi City, Iloilo; 53 yrs. old

Victor Galulan
Dorillo St., Passi City, Iloilo; 46 yrs. old

Bella T. Goron
Blk. 5 Lot 11 Callado St., Camella Homes, Lawaan I, Talisay City, Cebu; 32 yrs. old

MINDANAO

Erwin G. Soledad
Purok Mabuhay, Tubod, Iligan City; 22 yrs. old

Jorge Ballesteros
Purok Awthorium, Espina St., Surigao City; 38 yrs. old

Maricel Mangaron
Purok San Antonio, Tubod, Iligan City; 21 yrs. old

Larina C. Torrillo
616 Zone 1, Bulua, Cagayan De Oro City; 63 yrs. old

(16) FOURTH PRIZES Pioneer Home Theater

GMA

Prudencio B. Basa
2203 [illegible] St. [illegible] Valenzuela City, MM; 65 yrs. old

Eduardo Bantayan
558 San Juaquin St., Mandaluyong City; 44 yrs. old

Graciano A. Flores
2044 Jimenez St. San Andres Bukid MM; 35 yrs. old

Eloisa Inocencio
134 Lecheria Hill Calamba Laguna 4027; 29 yrs. old

LUZON

Christina B. Maurera
Labtuman [illegible] Villaverde Nueva Vizcaya 3710; 25 yrs. old

Tiburcio M. Bartolome
Calacle Bustos, Bulacan; 52 yrs. old

Maricho C. Reparial
Zone 5 Puduran, Albay; 29 yrs. old

Ednaline F. Gabanan
[illegible] Guesban Calasiao Pangasinan; 22 yrs. old

VISAYAS

Mildestila C. Dahan
Cabugan Bindoy Negros Oriental; 37 yrs. old

Wilfredo P. Cayrel
44 Bisa Project Pagami Leyte; 39 yrs. old

Zenaida Solamo
Kirayan Norte Mageo [illegible] City; 48 yrs. old

Uldarico O. Codillero, Jr.
Calamubaa Cpd. back of [illegible] Homes Salvador St. Cebu City; 49 yrs. old

MINDANAO

Emeliana F. Sia
Hulpa Tudela Misamis Occidental; 55 yrs. old

Juan V. Buca
[illegible] Iligan City 9200; 71 yrs. old

Orlando Hidalgo
Km 3 Libertad Butuan City; 54 yrs. old

Abello P. Balgue, Sr.
Blk. 17 Lot 30 [illegible] Homes Subd. Digos City; 50 yrs. old

(32) FIFTH PRIZES Pioneer VCD Component

GMA

Alfredo B. Cello
274 Burgos St. Lubid, Binangonan Rizal; 54 yrs. old

Tomas C. Ngo
[illegible] St. SFDM QC; 56 yrs. old

Salvio J. Mereader
Manila East Road Brgy. Tandang Kutyo Tanay Rizal; 34 yrs. old

Romeo G. Sabando
[illegible] Old Sta. Mesa Manila; 46 yrs. old

Yolanda A. Hilario
Puyat Subd. Purok Sampaguita Sta. Cruz Antipolo City; 35 yrs. old

Niceth M. Valdez
[illegible] Oriental Mindoro; 41 yrs. old

Isidoro P. Vivas
[illegible] Tanauan City; 57 yrs. old

Honorata Dino
[illegible] Cavite; 56 yrs. old

LUZON

Vivencia Honrado
[illegible] Puerto Princesa City Palawan 5300; 67 yrs. old

Serafin De Leon, Jr.
Malasin San Mateo Isabela, Purok 1; 25 yrs. old

Louella Carmel V. Arbues
[illegible] St. Paracale Camarines Norte; 26 yrs. old

Rosel C. Burac
23 Rizal St. Banawan Poduran, Albay 4510; 27 yrs. old

Josefina B. Ocampo
[illegible] La Union; 49 yrs. old

Jay G. Sanchez
104 San Agustin San Fernando, Pampanga; 23 yrs. old

Jockson Grande
[illegible] Norte 2906; 45 yrs. old

Violina D. Cabico
[illegible] Brgy. La Torre Talavera Nueva Ecija; 44 yrs. old

VISAYAS

Arnold C. Simporiano
R Mapa St. Mandurriao Iloilo City; 31 yrs. old

Lilybeth G. Fagutao
Brgy. Lawaan Roxas City; 29 yrs. old

Raymundo O. Tayo
Minapasuk Negros Occidental; 45 yrs. old

Gentalian Exuperio
[illegible] San Roque Maribojoc Bohol; 33 yrs. old

Lolita B. Follo
Purok 6 Cangmating Sibulan, Negros Oriental; 41 yrs. old

Jovito M. Alegoro, Sr.
[illegible] Cebu City 6000; 37 yrs. old

Ramil S. Conde
[illegible] Brgy. 4 Pob. Balangiga, Eastern Samar; 36 yrs. old

Belinda H. Siega
Purok [illegible] Cumbado, Maasin City; 44 yrs. old

MINDANAO

Miluen V. Laluna
[illegible] Talomo Davao City; 37 yrs. old

Anastacio B. Ido
[illegible] Agusan Del Norte; 42 yrs. old

Esterlita B. Gurres
Busco Quezon Bukidnon; 47 yrs. old

Olempio V. Concepcion
[illegible] Zamboanga Del Sur; 61 yrs. old

Gina Canton
[illegible] Polomolok South Cotabato; 28 yrs. old

Delma B. Genilia
[illegible] Kapatagan Lanao Del Norte; 31 yrs. old

Arlene G. Graciano
Acorn Drive Tugbungan Zamboanga City; 21 yrs. old

Ruth G. Fruto
Purok 1 [illegible] Sarangani Province 9502; 20 yrs. old

(32) SIXTH PRIZES GE Refrigerator 9 cu. ft.

GMA

Mirabella Ferrer
Brgy. 7 [illegible] Occidental Mindoro; 50 yrs. old

Rosario G. Ricafrenca
[illegible] Sta. Cruz Marinduque; 51 yrs. old

Lilia P. Chin
Brgy. [illegible] Pagsanjan, Laguna; 40 yrs. old

Merlinda Q. Hipol
2564 [illegible] Compound Gen. T. De Leon Valenzuela City; 42 yrs. old

Eduardo T. Joson
[illegible] Novaliches QC; 36 yrs. old

Bernard Patrick Cecilia
[illegible] Ave. Better Living Subd. Parañaque; 26 yrs. old

Michelle G. Palma
28 [illegible] St. Project 8 QC; 37 yrs. old

Alex Valerio
3661 Bayanihan St. Baclaran Parañaque City; 40 yrs. old

LUZON

Spencer C. Lupango
614 [illegible] Mobo Masbate 5401; 26 yrs. old

Jaime D. Asuncion, Sr.
Brgy. 33 A La Paz Laoag City 2900; 45 yrs. old

Sesinando M. Marcelino, Jr.
Blk. 2 Lot 27 [illegible] Tarlac City; 55 yrs. old

Evan A. Romero
Gogon Centro Virac Catanduanes; 26 yrs. old

Ronnie B. Castillejos
[illegible] Rd. Brgy. [illegible] Tuguegarao City Cagayan; 38 yrs. old

Blenvenido P. Raper
Brgy. Almacen Hermosa, Bataan; 34 yrs. old

Rolando C. Aquino
[illegible] West Lingayen Pangasinan; 45 yrs. old

Jenny Batalla
Sampaguita Minalabac Camarines Sur; 38 yrs. old

VISAYAS

Anabella Kiseo
San Jose Talibon Bohol; 39 yrs. old

Ma. Allyn C. Barrago
San Pedro Punta Verde Capiz; 31 yrs. old

Anna Mae Bagulo
14 Mango Ave. Bantayan Dumaguete City; 21 yrs. old

Jonah Marmolejo
[illegible] Dumangas Dumangas Iloilo City; 30 yrs. old

Ester L. Cualizares
[illegible] Subd. [illegible] Victorias City Negros Occ.; 61 yrs. old

Fe S. Jakosalem
4 [illegible] Rizal St. Iloilo City; 49 yrs. old

Prima A. Acedillo
Brgy. 2 Balangiga Eastern Samar; 44 yrs. old

Lucrecio Q. Razon
[illegible] Cebu; 50 yrs. old

MINDANAO

Luchi C. Mercado
Km. 11 [illegible] Davao City; 28 yrs. old

Jean F. Patayon
[illegible] Ozamis City, Misamis Occidental; 32 yrs. old

Jessie G. Cruzado
[illegible] Brgy. Muntay Bod Butuan; 43 yrs. old

Roem Dela China, Sr.
[illegible] South Cotabato; 45 yrs. old

Belen D. Laid
[illegible] Surigao City 8400; 54 yrs. old

Diana Jean A. Alavar
[illegible] Zamboanga City; 44 yrs. old

Helen C. Labid
[illegible] Lanao Del Norte; 35 yrs. old

Rosario I. Cabon
[illegible] Misamis Oriental; 40 yrs. old

(32) SEVENTH PRIZES PIONEER DVD Player

GMA

Maureen C. Cadorniga
72 [illegible] St. Brgy. Pinagkaisahan Cubao QC; 26 yrs. old

Demetrio Blanan
Blk. 100 Lot 16 Central Bicutan Taguig MM; 56 yrs. old

Jacinto E. Barretto
[illegible] Brgy. Cubao QC; 63 yrs. old

Anna V. Magno
[illegible] Rd. 4 Pag Asa QC; 45 yrs. old

Alexander Apostol, Sr.
85 [illegible] QC; 53 yrs. old

Victoria G. Erasmo
[illegible] Magallanes Cavite; 57 yrs. old

Modesta B. Altez
Brgy. [illegible] Pedro Burgos Quezon; 60 yrs. old

Rosemarie M. Humirang
[illegible] Oriental Mindoro; 36 yrs. old

LUZON

Merlita S. Narra
6 Tacay Rd. [illegible] Baguio City; 41 yrs. old

Opallene C. Arce
[illegible] Brgy. San Juan Narvacan Ilocos Sur; 18 yrs. old

Suguiminda Manapat
[illegible] Aurora; 45 yrs. old

Andy Alberto
[illegible] Nueva Ecija; 35 yrs. old

Noel G. Cancejo
[illegible] Cagayan; 35 yrs. old

Meden M. Orlina
Doña Leonila St. Zone 6 San Juan Iriga City; 48 yrs. old

Teresa A. Bello
[illegible] Legaspi City; 43 yrs. old

Reynaldo C. Suan
12 Quirino Ave. Narra Palawan; 40 yrs. old

VISAYAS

Desiree Joy Vegafria
[illegible] Antique 5702; 20 yrs. old

Leticia Y. Alag
[illegible] Aklan; 53 yrs. old

Jay Tinambunan
[illegible] Iloilo City; 27 yrs. old

Manuel B. Castillo
[illegible] Catbalogan Samar; 43 yrs. old

Crispiniana Cariño
Brgy. [illegible] Mayorga Leyte 6507; 64 yrs. old

Patrocinio M. Bacariza
[illegible] Cebu; 48 yrs. old

Edito Vidal, Jr.
[illegible] Bayawan City Negros Oriental; 40 yrs. old

Paquito A. Cuil
Brgy. [illegible] City Negros Occidental; 53 yrs. old

MINDANAO

Dario Bergado
[illegible] Lanao Del Norte; 43 yrs. old

Erma Grafil
Purok 7 [illegible] Davao City; 31 yrs. old

Floriano C. Subiza, Jr.
[illegible] Ozamis City; 37 yrs. old

Eduardo P. Lozano
[illegible] Zamboanga City; 48 yrs. old

Ligaya D. Nacido
[illegible] Gen. Santos City; 45 yrs. old

Maurice Villaluz
[illegible] Surigao Del Sur; 39 yrs. old

Abdulkalim Plang
[illegible] Cotabato City 9600; 61 yrs. old

Gina P. Selitona
[illegible] Purok 5 Malaybalay City 8700; [illegible] yrs. old

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(128) EIGHTH PRIZES NOKIA 3315 w/ Globe Phonekit

GMA

Ramil P. Bacolor
1049-C Roxas St., Sampaloc, Manila, 35 yrs old

Marilou A. Arriola
17 J Colton St., Mesaico Vill., Palangoy, Binangonan, Rizal, 42 yrs old

Caridad C. Layug
17 Concepcion St., Sta. Ana, San Mateo, Rizal, 73 yrs old

Romeo B. Martinez
1585 Maria Clara St., Sampaloc, Manila, 41 yrs old

Yolanda B. Sta. Ana
47 Dr. Pilapil St., Sagad, Pasig City, 57 yrs old

Aileen Francis M. Santos
8-B Ruby St., Doña Juliana Vill., Ortigas Ext., Pasig City, 33 yrs old

Vincent M. Corcuera
Rm. 314 Calvo Bldg., Escolta, Manila, 33 yrs old

Purita R. Damian
218 Area I-A Luzon Ave., Old Balara, QC, 38 yrs old

Myrna I. Legaspi
Phase 2 Package 3 Block 63 Lot 2, Bagong Silang, Caloocan City, 39 yrs old

Ramon C. del Rosario
186 Repuso St., Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City, 42 yrs old

Cristina B. Lopez
Phase 5 Blk. 1 CL41, ACM Alapan, Cavite, 34 yrs old

Enrico E. Silva
Bulacnin, Lipa City, Batangas, 36 yrs old

Isidonia G. Lucas
B5 Lot 15 Don Jose Zavalla Subd., Pooc, Sta. Rosa, Laguna, 47 yrs old

Gener A. Chavez
Managpi, Calapan City, Oriental Mindoro, 41 yrs old

Alexander J. Gandia
2091 Samala St., Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite, 47 yrs old

Nena Alcones
San Rafael, San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro, 68 yrs old

Federico A. Lumansoc
28 A Pabro St., Karuhatan, Valenzuela City, 32 yrs old

Ernesto M. Plaza
151 Roosevelt Ave., Brgy. Paraiso, SFDM, QC, 58 yrs old

Alejo P. Esoy
45 Kanginsan Ext., Don Antonio Hts., Brgy. Holy Spirit, QC, 39 yrs old

Bienvenido V. Realino
293 C.M. Recto Ave., Tondo, Manila 1012, 75 yrs old

Luciano L. Mendoza III
D63 B Villa Regina Condo, F. Antonio St., Bambang, Pasig City, 25 yrs old

Herman M. Pallado, Jr.
B27 L16 Villa Luisa P2, Bagumbong, Caloocan City, 44 yrs old

Linda L. Ordono
Block 29 Lot 7 Phase 1, E.P. Village, West Bicutan, Taguig, 37 yrs old

Teresita B. Espedilla
1851 Hurtadez St., Sampaloc, Manila, 43 yrs old

Nelson R. Agaton
1563 A Antipolo St., Sampaloc, Manila, 59 yrs old

Violeta Ganilao
Leona St., San Augustine Village, Pinamalayan, Oriental Mindoro, 48 yrs old

Felisa G. Balderama
San Isidro, San Luis, Batangas, 52 yrs old

Nenita Pacil
832 Guioc, Cabuyao, Laguna, 41 yrs old

Rosalinda C. Tapawan
119 Malagasang II-F, Imus, Cavite 4103, 65 yrs old

Weliza B. Alfaro
Lumangbayan, San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro, 42 yrs old

Charity V. Patacsil
228 Lakandula St., San Jose, Occidental Mindoro, 59 yrs old

Adelaida Sebastian
79 Olivarez Field Subd., Sahod Ulan, Tanza, Cavite, 51 yrs old

LUZON

Leonida V. Pareño
551 Santol St., Landing Limay, Bataan, 43 yrs old

Erlinda A. Ragas
Sitio Tinago, Bantigue, Masbate City, 50 yrs old

Josne G. Dadpaas
Cervantes, Ilocos Sur, 30 yrs old

Marieta R. Racho
Zone 6 Manga, Oas, Albay, 36 yrs old

Remedios G. Nebres
Brgy. 5 Camalig, Albay, 66 yrs old

Dario N. Medon
Colcol Bangao, Buguias, Benguet Province, 51 yrs old

Ponciano V. Palasigue
San Ricardo, Talavera, Nueva Ecija, 55 yrs old

Corazon T. Manguera
Lawy, Capas, Tarlac, 67 yrs old

Rufe M. Lomibao
Salomague Sur, Bugallon, Pangasinan, 51 yrs old

Angelica S. Constantino
36 Tagupan St., Brgy. Quirino, Solano, Nueva Vizcaya, 26 yrs old

Irene A. Arellano
Brgy. 3 Hernando St., Laoag City, 53 yrs old

Fe S. Gutierrez
5-A Kentucky Lane, Upper Kalaklan, Olongapo City, 50 yrs old

Marcina D. Maddawin
Kalabaza, Aurora, Isabela, 39 yrs old

Josefina J. Litong
Purok 2, Pareng, Jose Panganiban, Camarines Norte, 52 yrs old

Girlie C. Panagsagan
Guntaragan, Santa Fe, Romblon, 35 yrs old

Rodrigo E. Sapao
Block 28 Lot 62, Model Community, Pio [illegible] Pampanga, 44 yrs old

Salvador M. Baltazar, Jr.
87 Poblacion, Plaridel, Bulacan, 82 yrs old

Elenita B. Acedo
Pamutic, Pidigan, Abra, 38 yrs old

Arlyn E. Cipriano
502 Calaocan Sur, Binmaley, Pangasinan, 32 yrs old

Grace B. Babol
South Bitano, Legazpi City, 28 yrs old

Jovy G. Almario
San Francisco, Bulan, Sorsogon, 35 yrs old

Rosalina R. Bustamante
270 Lauan St., Tortugas, Balanga City, Bataan, 30 yrs old

Marlon G. Baluyut
23 Sto. Domingo II, Capas, Tarlac City 2315, 29 yrs old

Rosita C. Edroco
Burgos, Naguilian, Isabela, 45 yrs old

Josefina Pineda
Malimi St., San Quintin, Pangasinan, 51 yrs old

Imelda Harmois
Bitalag, Tagudin, Ilocos Sur, 37 yrs old

Beatriz Dalo
Zone 3 Princess Urduja, Narra, Palawan, 48 yrs old

Mercedes Gabatin
Purok 2 San Manuel, Cabarroguis, Quirino 3400, 44 yrs old

Rolando E. Pempeña
Tagongtong, Goa, Camarines Sur, 45 yrs old

Pablo C. Gonzales
[illegible] Labo, Camarines Norte, 41 yrs old

Leticia C. Pabilona
[illegible] Masinloc, Zambales, 56 yrs old

Marcial D. Pili
Pag [illegible] Cabanatuan City, 19 yrs old

VISAYAS

Jose T. Dulman, Jr.
Rizal St., Murcia, Negros Occidental, 45 yrs old

Jesus Marco
South Poblacion, La Libertad, Negros Occidental, 58 yrs old

Christian George B. Buñales
c/o BH Candahug, Palo, Leyte, 28 yrs old

Susana S. Azucenas
18 Kalachuchi St., Capitolville Subd., Bacolod City, 44 yrs old

Wilfredo Gavelangga
Brgy. San Jose, Binalbagan, Negros Occidental, 62 yrs old

Rey M. Chu
512 Alegria Village, Ormoc City, Leyte, 36 yrs old

Pedro Pigar
Brgy. Real St., Capoocan, Leyte, 48 yrs old

Ronnie A. Babano
San Antonio, Pob., Loon, Bohol 6304, 49 yrs old

Lameter Saagundo
205 Tinaan, Lilo-an, Cebu, 38 yrs old

Romeo C. Pagunsan
Sitio Corazon, Guinsay, Danao City, Cebu, 44 yrs old

Rudy Buenafe, Jr.
Sto. Rosario, Tibiao, Antique, 24 yrs old

Teresita M. Suan
Cang-Alwang, Siquijor 6225, 46 yrs old

Junafe Abrasaldo
Okiot, Bais City, Negros Oriental, 34 yrs old

Rosely Z. Rufin
Rosario, Malinao, Aklan, 35 yrs old

Gemma E. Katipunan
Real St., Bando, Iloilo City, 28 yrs old

Marcelo M. Cartoja
Acao, Cabatuan, Iloilo City, 45 yrs old

Remigio S. Rojo
8 Guzman St., Mandurriao, Iloilo City, 53 yrs old

Hilarion Escobido
Virgen, Cuda, Bohol, 65 yrs old

Danilo Mosquera
J-2 Gonzaga Village, Mansilingan, Bacolod City, 40 yrs old

Arturo Agustin
San Esteban PH 3, Bago City, Negros Occidental, 48 yrs old

Nerie Mahusay
Zone 8 San Agustin St., San Roque, Northern Samar, 61 yrs old

Fidel Labrada
Old Road Sagkahan, Tacloban City, 57 yrs old

Manuel A. Bodo, Sr.
Brgy. Cutay, Cangara, Leyte, 62 yrs old

Marita Domael
Sapa Sapa Subangdaku, Mandaue City, 40 yrs old

Ma. Novelita P. Damiles
Banker I Daring, Carmen, Cebu City, 35 yrs old

Jhay U. Dalagan
Bariad, Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental, 20 yrs old

Julius D. Gordoncillo
South Poblacion, Jimalalud, Negros Oriental, 36 yrs old

Gregorio V. Valle
Purok 3, Pob. Basay, Negros Oriental, 51 yrs old

Laurenel T. Derit
B3B L4 Natividad St., Carmela Valley Homes Subd., Talisay City, Negros Occ., 29 yrs old

Jomelyn Dela Cruz
Elzaldo St., Pres. Roxas, Capiz, 38 yrs old

Jerry P. Aguilar
09-009 Semon Aguilar St., Passi City, Iloilo, 34 yrs old

Melchor A. Diana
Mabuyong, Anini-y, Antique, 32 yrs old

MINDANAO

Merly L. Alimanza
Maganay, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay, 32 yrs old

Marilyn L. Ocupe
740 Upper Turno, Dipolog City 7100, 41 yrs old

Juliet G. Adaza
Dohinob, Roxas, Zamboanga Del Norte, 54 yrs old

Hazel A. Apog
Phase 5 Maria Cristina, Balo-I, Lanao Del Norte, 22 yrs old

Rosita F. Abañas
Purok 5, Puerto Hi-way, Cagayan de Oro City, 87 yrs old

Merlita Sajol
Minsacuta, Ane-i, Claveria, Misamis Oriental, 31 yrs old

Elizabeth B. Tenchavez
Purok 5, Rizal St., Agusan Del Norte, 45 yrs old

Aimee C. Siso
Km. 1 Purok 18, Tungao, Butuan City, 34 yrs old

Esteban Sanchez, Jr.
27 Sitio Dacudao, Dacudao Ave. cor Loyola St., Agdao, Davao City, 54 yrs old

Yalelene L. Caro
Blk. 2 Lot 29, San Juan Village, Bangkal, Davao City, 21 yrs old

Dolly Diano
1379 Lily St., Bunawan, Davao Del Sur, 45 yrs old

Ma. Lourdes M. Dela Cruz
238 Don Alfaro St., Tetuan, Zamboanga City, 38 yrs old

Ronald Chatto
Poblacion, Makilala, Cotabato City, 43 yrs old

Wilfred F. Dormido
Poblacion, Pres. Roxas, Cotabato City 9405, 37 yrs old

Leonidas Villoga
Purok Mangga, Morrow St., Koronadal City, 65 yrs old

Even Estefania
Pob. Norala, South Cotabato, 34 yrs old

Noel B. Piola
Purok 8 Mabad, Oroquieta City, 44 yrs old

Rosemario S. Partosa
[illegible] Katipunan, Zamboanga Del Norte, 35 yrs old

Evelyn B. Sumaylo
Purok 1 CARP Maigo, Lanao Del Norte, 27 yrs old

Margarito L. Padillo, Jr.
Purok 3, [illegible] Bukidnon, 19 yrs old

Liliosa H. Magadan
Brgy. 3 Poblacion, Talakag, Bukidnon 8708, 57 yrs old

Anastacia F. Kikay
[illegible] Buenavista, Agusan Del Norte 8601, 64 yrs old

Leonardo L. Caballero
207 Capitol Site, Butuan City, 61 yrs old

Evelyn P. Donoso
Cor. Curato & Atega Sts., Cabadbaran, Agusan Del Norte, 51 yrs old

Josie S. Demotica
4480 Luna Ext., Digos City, 45 yrs old

Shiela B. Quibal
13 Manuel Salvador St., Zone 3, San Antonio, Buhangin, Davao City, 26 yrs old

Sarah D. Virtadazo
Poblacion 2, Burgos, Surigao del Norte, 49 yrs old

Violeta L. Valdez
B 15 L 14 Mutual Homes, Kasanyangan Subd., [illegible] Zamboanga City, 47 yrs old

Florinda D. Lu
Ugalingan, Carmen, North Cotabato, 71 yrs old

Alma Apaitan
c/o Apaitan Store, Upper Aurora St., Koronadal City, 41 yrs old

Reynaldo Dela Gente
Blk. 6 Phase 5 Fatima, General Santos City, 42 yrs old

Andili Salinas
Phase 2 [illegible] Sarangani Province, 38 yrs old

(256) NINTH PRIZES GE Microwave Oven 0.6 cu. ft.

GMA

Francisco F. Alambat
Blk. 1 Lot 17 Phase I-C Fumera Homes, Sta. Monica, Novaliches, QC, 40 yrs old

Audifaz General
21-D Sinagtala St., Batasan Hills, QC, 50 yrs old

Salud M. Relativo
5031-D Gomez St., Tejeros, Makati, 47 yrs old

Luisa T. Pañoso
7160 Gumamela St., Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City, 51 yrs old

Remedios Cacananta
3212 Tabora St., Tondo, Manila, 48 yrs old

Percival D. Martinez
21-D Paez St., Concepcion, Malabon City, 24 yrs old

Elizabeth S. Azucena
686 Gastambide St., Sampaloc, Manila 1008, 50 yrs old

Araceli C. Peña
1770 Kaabi St., Punta, Sta. Ana, Manila, 57 yrs old

Eduardo C. Supnet
27 R. Soriman St., Parang, Marikina City, 48 yrs old

Candido B. Aguilar
94 Gen. Luna St., GBI, San Mateo, Rizal, 38 yrs old

Romeo S. Daluz
20 Pearl St., Pasig Greenland Village, Pasig City, 68 yrs old

Domingo Canan
14 Brgy. Valenzuela City, 53 yrs old

Fermina S. Ababa
445 Honorio Lopez Blvd., Tondo, Manila, 65 yrs old

Rhozavett H. Ellmen
965-A Lerma St., Sampaloc, Manila, 3[illegible] yrs old

Mariz R. Laderas
33-D Judge A. [illegible] Sampaguita St., Navotas MM, 19 yrs old

Jacqueline A. Lopez
19 [illegible] St., Hulo, Mandaluyong City, 27 yrs old

Herman Cervantes
1191 Vito Cruz Extn., Makati City, 69 yrs old

Bryan Gil L. Garcia
24 Fisita St., Pansol, Balara, QC, 19 yrs old

Edmundo L. Sioco
36 G. Del Pilar St., Quisao, Pililla, Rizal, 30 yrs old

Alfonso F. Bautista
26 6th Ave., Cubao, QC 1109, 55 yrs old

Domiciano C. Loyva, Jr.
2942 B [illegible] Manalo St., Punta, Sta. Ana, Manila, 66 yrs old

Emeteria C. Bibal
Brgy. 1 Quezon Ave., Calanauan, Quezon, 57 yrs old

Roberto E. Olivo
4th Brgy. Magsaysay, Silang, Cavite 4118, 55 yrs old

Amor Delos Santos
[illegible] Ave., Seabreeze Subd., Cavite, 45 yrs old

Ruben Abjelina
Union St., Brgy. Lucky, Lemery, Batangas, 57 yrs old

Virgilio T. Centeno
217 M. E. Manuel St., San Jose, Montalban, Rizal, 49 yrs old

Romeo D. Bayani
Brgy. Cogunan, Nasugbu, Batangas, 37 yrs old

Melvin Y. Flores
51 Roxing Road, Kamuning, QC, 56 yrs old

Leopoldo R. Reformado
E2-B Talaba Dos, Bacoor, Cavite, 63 yrs old

Roger A. Layosa
9 Gregorio Drive, T.S. Cruz Subd., Novaliches, QC, 29 yrs old

Cristina M. Valdez
Alma Villa, Gloria, Oriental Mindoro, 40 yrs old

Primitiva Escamillas
Biga Pula, Oriental Mindoro, 70 yrs old

Lolita C. De Guzman
4 Sta. Rita St., Villa Magdalena II, Camarin Rd., Caloocan City, 67 yrs old

Arturo S. Purilan
2016 Kang-kang St., Batasan Hills, QC, 31 yrs old

Jacqueline Anne R. Jeturian
Blk. 2 Lot 1 St. Matthew St., Sacred Heart Village, Novaliches, QC, 41 yrs old

Hilario L. Navida, Sr.
37 D.I. Magsaysay St., Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City, 52 yrs old

Mendy R. Lim
14 Biruang St., La Loma, QC, 31 yrs old

Estrella L. Macabale
1065 Primero de Mayo St., Tondo, Manila, 47 yrs old

Rosemarie G. Uy
64 Q. Villa Ortigas II, Granada St., QC, 41 yrs old

Francisco G. Valenzuela, Jr.
22-A Katubusan St., Brgy. Rivera, San Juan MM, 64 yrs old

Adoracion M. Restituto
8-B Edna St., BF Homes, Almanza, Las Piñas City, 57 yrs old

Constancio F. Estacio, Jr.
182 San Juan St., Looc, Cardona, Rizal, 46 yrs old

Manolo M. Manuel
807 J.P. Rizal St., Fortune Subd., Concepcion, Marikina City, 40 yrs old

Ruben D. Abarientos
5067 Ugong Sukol, Valenzuela City, 38 yrs old

Lita M. Langit
[illegible] Roxas St., 5879 Paranan, Makati City, 30 yrs old

Joelita S. Sadorra
Nena Subd., Maly, San Mateo, Rizal, 25 yrs old

Reggie V. Bea
295 Saint Martin St., Mahogany Subd., B. Bayan, Taguig MM, 19 yrs old

Ernesto S. Hernandez, Jr.
134 [illegible] Mendoza St., Buting, Pasig City, 25 yrs old

Ludivina Y. Villarosa
566 J. Rizal St., Makati City, 67 yrs old

Gina M. Arnejo
46 Rajah Matanda St., Brgy. Villa Ma. Clara, Project 4, QC, 33 yrs old

Nestor Perez
Blk. 46 Lot 8 Phase A Mabuhay Homes, Darangan, Binangonan, Rizal, 45 yrs old

Dominador Ferror
1277 Mangga St., [illegible] Bagbaguin, Valenzuela City, 48 yrs old

Servillon T. Tomas
Brgy. Bagong Kalsada, Calamba, Laguna, 83 yrs old

Jerry Huertaluela
1268 M.H. Del Pilar St., Sta. Cruz, Laguna, 52 yrs old

Godofredo C. Pasco
62 Brgy. I Amaya, Tanza, Cavite, 47 yrs old

Crizaldo A. Perez
159-A Parian, Calamba City, Laguna, 38 yrs old

Modesto Marasigan
Aplaya, Bauan, Batangas, 69 yrs old

Basilio S. Guzman, Jr.
Villa Grande, Bauan, Batangas, 43 yrs old

Felicisimo Abogado
1223 Southern City, Tanzang Luma 4, Imus, Cavite, 73 yrs old

Isabelo P. Bergado
Brgy. Castaños Cerca, Gen. E. Aguinaldo, Cavite, 66 yrs old

Mario A. Perfecto
B 4 L 1 Phase I, [illegible] Buhay na Tubig, Imus, Cavite, 57 yrs old

Leila Del Mundo
Pas. Socorro, Oriental Mindoro, 49 yrs old

Eugenia A. Delos Santos
59 M. Santos St., Sta. Cruz, Cavite City 4100, 60 yrs old

Nerissa F. Olimpo
Brgy. 1 Payompon, Mamburao, Occidental Mindoro, 43 yrs old

LUZON

Rebecca A. Reyes
73 Sagrada Familia, Hagonoy, Bulacan, 51 yrs old

Rosana C. Salak
4 Brgy. Manga, Capas, Tarlac, 36 yrs old

Violeta R. Dineros
Iraya Sur, Oas, Albay, 45 yrs old

Rowena V. Magday
16 Magsaysay St., Brgy. San Pablo, Castillejos, Zambales 2208, 34 yrs old

Leonila C. Tapec
San Placido, Roxas, Isabela 3320, 31 yrs old

Evangeline C. Reyno
[illegible] Isabela, 39 yrs old

Danilo G. Palway
Luna, Burgos, Ilocos Sur, 40 yrs old

Pacifico Delos Reyes
Bangui, Ilocos Norte, 68 yrs old

Macario M. Abubo, Jr.
488 [illegible] Bauang, La Union, 41 yrs old

May M. Coronel
Victoria Park, Abrea II, Libertad, Brgy. Bagong Silang, Puerto Princesa, Palawan, 23 yrs old

Jamil Cerillo
Abing's Food House, T. Cabiles St., Tabaco City, 21 yrs old

Marilou Balitaon
Eco Avenue, Mercedes, Camarines Norte, 29 yrs old

Romeo A. Guillo
43 Calungusan, Orion, Bataan, 65 yrs old

Rosemarie L. Reyes
[illegible] Meycauayan, Bulacan, 29 yrs old

Estelito P. Mendoza
Care, Paniqui, Tarlac, 25 yrs old

Lanie D. Soriano
Macabaclay, Bongabon, Nueva Ecija, 33 yrs old

Josefina P. Nolasco
[illegible] St., Taal, Bocaue, Bulacan, 36 yrs old

Liza Medina
25 Cristina St., Masinloc, Zambales, 43 yrs old

Darwin R. Canuto
J. Lukban Ext., Daet, Camarines Norte, 21 yrs old

Wilfredo M. Barrozo
26 Bantay, Manaoag, Pangasinan, 33 yrs old

Catherine D. Arola
[illegible] Iguig, Cagayan, 26 yrs old

Maria Daquez
Purok 1, Lapaz, Saguday, Quirino, 40 yrs old

Jerry P. Moltio
KB 38 Cruz, La Trinidad, Benguet, 39 yrs old

Nester Galiza
Latinab Pequeño, Reina Mercedes, Isabela, 46 yrs old

Melanie L. Marina
Phase I Azucena Ext., Naga Subd., Naga City, 42 yrs old

Pablo D. De Guzman
250 [illegible] Pulilan, Bulacan, 38 yrs old

Rebecca T. Rafol
Mabuyo, San Fernando, Romblon, 42 yrs old

Felizardo L. Agustin, Jr.
Palihan, Hermosa, Bataan, 54 yrs old

Gregorio Levantino
[illegible] Albay, 33 yrs old

Jose Rey B. Olaguera
Brgy. 3 Camalig, Albay, 36 yrs old

Vecilyn M. Onding
Zone 6 [illegible] St., San Juan, Iriga City, 30 yrs old

Jinky V. Lim
[illegible] Milagros, Masbate, 22 yrs old

Marive L. Gomez
Regalado St., Pob. 4, Moncada, Tarlac 2308, 27 yrs old

Marsha S. Alvarez
C. Pimentel St., Placer, Masbate 5404, 26 yrs old

Adelino E. Dela Cruz
Purok 1, Ilaya, Diffun, Quirino, 30 yrs old

Florencio Angulo, Jr.
[illegible] Gerona, Tarlac, 52 yrs old

Olga C. Salazar
52 Laurel Ave., Purok 5, Rizal, Santiago City, 27 yrs old

Mario B. Millan
[illegible] Dasol, Pangasinan 2411, 34 yrs old

Remedios Abdua
43 Quezon St., Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, 64 yrs old

Norberto B. Ganitano, Jr.
[illegible] San Jose, Sarrat, Ilocos Norte 2914, 40 yrs old

Neshel C. Tejano
[illegible] Ilocos Sur, 25 yrs old

Noel Marcaida
[illegible] Sorsogon City 4700, 29 yrs old

Desiree R. Estrella
[illegible] Brgy. 44, [illegible] Ilocos Norte, 34 yrs old

Agustin Sario, Sr.
[illegible] Brooke's Point, Palawan, 43 yrs old

Noel E. Manalili
88 San Roque, Sta. Ana, Pampanga, [illegible]

Melanie Gabun
[illegible]

Desiderio M. Velasquez
[illegible] Bulacan, 41 yrs old

Orlando A. Nuguid
Brgy. [illegible] Paniqui, Tarlac, [illegible]

Ma. Beverly D. Abanador
[illegible] San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, 35 yrs old

Andrea G. Sulit
[illegible] San Miguel, Bulacan, [illegible]

Joben S. Capispisan
San Rafael, Castilla, Sorsogon, 26 yrs old

Emily D. Pimentel
[illegible] San Mateo, Isabela, 68 yrs old

Imelda B. Manipon
Brgy. [illegible] San Juan, La Union, [illegible]

Virginia T. Guzman
Pob. [illegible] Abra, 76 yrs old

Edilberto S. Salindong, Jr.
[illegible] Pangasinan, 30 yrs old

Juan M. Bania, Jr.
[illegible] Tabuk City, [illegible]

Melinda B. Obenia
[illegible] 35 yrs old

Arnie T. Agagon
[illegible] Masbate City, [illegible]

Mario B. De Leon
Mabatang, Abucay, Bataan, 70 yrs old

Felipe Ibasitas
[illegible] Pangasinan, 51 yrs old

Remigia P. Granado
[illegible] East, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan, [illegible]

Robert Sevilla
53 Division St., Labo, Camarines Norte, 34 yrs old

Concepcion P. Lahindao
[illegible] 25 yrs old

Renato S. Villanueog
[illegible] Odiongan, Romblon, 54 yrs old

VISAYAS

Garry F. Gayas
105 San Jose St., Jaro, Leyte, 26 yrs old

Fortunato Pitoc
[illegible] Esperanza, Matalom, Leyte, 36 yrs old

Rogelio S. Diamante
[illegible] Libertad Ext., Bacolod City, 54 yrs old

Isidro F. Jamolin
Zone III Brgy. San Jose, San Miguel, [illegible] City, 45 yrs old

Robesito L. Clemente
[illegible] Canlaon City, Negros Oriental, [illegible]

Bernard Y. Gonzales
D. Durano St., Suba, Danao City, Cebu, [illegible]

Nilo D. Gomonid
F. Llamas St. cor San Jose Village, Talisay, Cebu City, 35 yrs old

Andrew G. Gomez
[illegible] Bohol, 29 yrs old

Elgin G. Dineros
[illegible] Negros Occidental, 30 yrs old

Leopoldo Namia
[illegible] Negros Oriental, 62 yrs old

Maricel De Dios
Daro, Dumaguete City, 21 yrs old

Elmer R. Yap
51 B. [illegible] St., Cebu City, 30 yrs old

Isidro M. Celeros, Jr.
Punta San Remegio, Cebu City, 44 yrs old

Orvil R. Felices
[illegible] Mabolo, Cebu City, 29 yrs old

Gwendolyn Escanilla
23rd A. Del Rosario St., Mandaue City, Cebu 6014, [illegible]

Manuel D. Hipolito, Jr.
Pob. San Dionisio, Iloilo City, 35 yrs old

Rogelio Baldivino
Brgy. [illegible] Negros Occidental, 41 yrs old

Romeo Escovidal
[illegible] Loboc, Bohol, 48 yrs old

Sunday Grace G. Ramos
[illegible] Andagao, Kalibo, Aklan, 27 yrs old

Nimfa E. Baculona
Aureliana, Patnongon, Antique, 55 yrs old

Cecilia S. Lacson
La Salle Ave., Bacolod City, Negros Occidental, [illegible]

Rex P. Jubelag
80 N. Jalandoni St., Jaro, Iloilo City, 46 yrs old

Gloria V. Eramis
Rizal St., Brgy. Zone [illegible] Talisay City, Negros Occidental, 62 yrs old

Ma. Lourdes R. Pacilbar
[illegible] Public Market, [illegible] 36 yrs old

Lucrecia S. Tiu
Brgy. [illegible] Sta. Rita, Samar, 38 yrs old

Santiago P. Señaso
Brgy. [illegible] Leyte, [illegible]

Avolino F. Tagacay
Zone 3 [illegible] Iloilo, 57 yrs old

Emily Ann L. Yap
[illegible] Bacolod City, 37 yrs old

Maricel Polnias
Tubasay, Allen, Northern Samar, [illegible]

Aimee B. Villafuerte
[illegible] Leyte, 19 yrs old

Mark R. Maderazo
Brgy. [illegible] Biliran, 27 yrs old

Lustria B. Delima
[illegible] Subd., Guzman St., Mandurriao, Iloilo City, [illegible]

Ma. Rosario N. Jutic
902 San Dionisio St., Tanauan, Leyte, 20 yrs old

Lilia R. Ynion
[illegible] Negros Occidental, 53 yrs old

Eden A. Sicad
Concepcion, Iloilo City, 47 yrs old

Renier B. Badoles
[illegible] Panay, Capiz 5801, 21 yrs old

Dionisio Herbota
[illegible] Trinidad, Bohol, 38 yrs old

Jocsinis Plateros
Mactan Country Homes, Timpolok, Lapu-Lapu, Cebu, 27 yrs old

Castor Belandres
[illegible] Dalaguete, Cebu City 6022, 47 yrs old

Emeliana Cabusora
Brgy. San Roque, [illegible] Leyte 6503, 66 yrs old

Melchor R. Gadier
Brgy. Teniente Benito, Tubungan, Iloilo, 41 yrs old

Marion A. Cadalso
Poblacion, Manjuyod, Negros Oriental, 42 yrs old

Michael Du
[illegible] East Ave., Tagbilaran City, Bohol, 26 yrs old

Ricardo Reyes
P. Ocampo Drive, [illegible] Cebu City, 45 yrs old

Jorge Jangalay
Highway Looc, Poblacion, Argao, Cebu, 31 yrs old

James M. Granada
[illegible] Jimalalud, Negros Oriental, 24 yrs old

Zaldy E. Caldera
Riverbanks, Bacong, Negros Oriental, 38 yrs old

Deny C. Alasa
Sto. Rosario, Ajuy, Iloilo City, 48 yrs old

Rebecca F. Cuevas
[illegible] T. Padilla St., Cebu City, 27 yrs old

Amiani Jaani
[illegible] Dumaguete City, 44 yrs old

Eileen L. Demol
B. Rodriguez Ext., Cebu City, 35 yrs old

Joefrey Cabana
Brgy. [illegible] San Joaquin, Iloilo City, [illegible]

Rey R. Borres
[illegible] Lambunao, Iloilo City 5042, 31 yrs old

Alfredo Butihen
Hacienda [illegible] Victorias City, Negros Occidental, 47 yrs old

Francisco B. Cañete, Jr.
[illegible] Brgy. Mambulac, Silay City, Negros Occidental, 28 yrs old

Peter Lim
[illegible] Brgy. Marvel, Culaba, Biliran, 71 yrs old

Jorge V. Aya-ay
[illegible] San Jose, Tacloban City, 74 yrs old

Efren C. Solinap
[illegible] Mandurriao, Iloilo City, [illegible]

Norma C. Chua
[illegible] Bacolod City, 65 yrs old

Ludy T. Dumdum
[illegible] Toboso, Negros Occidental, 47 yrs old

Eric A. Dato
772 Bante St., Catarman, Northern Samar, 34 yrs old

Joel M. Ragaodao
Brgy. [illegible] Pastrana, Leyte, 19 yrs old

Helly D. Buque
Brgy. [illegible] Mondragon, Northern Samar, [illegible]

Vella C. Fama
[illegible] Sta. Barbara, Iloilo City, [illegible]

MINDANAO

Hilario S. Timbal
B-3 L-5 Steel Town, Sta. Elena, Iligan City, 42 yrs old

Antonio Calderon
[illegible] Public Market, Misamis Oriental, 66 yrs old

Alza A. Dela
[illegible] East, Bacolod, Lanao Del Norte, 18 yrs old

William B. Racines
[illegible] Magsaysay, Gingoog City, Misamis Oriental, 48 yrs old

Luzviminda C. Lirasan
Tugasnon, Alubijid, Misamis Oriental, [illegible]

Elias Diwan
Sitio Santa Cruz, Aduyon, Pangantucan, Bukidnon, 71 yrs old

Edgar M. Onde
Don Jose Aguirre, Manukan, Zamboanga Del Norte, 29 yrs old

Ligaya M. Maguinsay
[illegible] Misamis Occ., [illegible]

Susano F. Cabatingan
Purok 10 Pob., Prosperidad, Agusan Sur, 56 yrs old

Cindy Camaso
F. Duarte St., Sta. Lucia Dist., Pagadian City, Zamboanga Del Sur, 28 yrs old

Myrna B. Luberanos
Purok 6 Poblacion East, [illegible] Zamboanga Del Norte 7114, 29 yrs old

Oswer M. Salisid
[illegible] Mabini St., [illegible] Zamboanga Del Sur, 27 yrs old

Emoterio Ravoco
Poblacion, Tampilisan, Zamboanga Del Norte 7116, 64 yrs old

Junvic P. Guelos
[illegible] Butuan City, [illegible]

Buenaventura Polintan
San Teodoro, Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur, 40 yrs old

Merilyn F. Cosmiano
[illegible] Brgy. Doongan, Butuan City, 34 yrs old

Nestor B. Espejon
Brgy. 12 Poblacion, Dapa, Surigao Del Norte, [illegible]

Juniorico Mercado
Purok Acharon, Labangal, Gen. Santos City, 62 yrs old

Josue P. Diagan
Brgy. [illegible] Alabel, Sarangani Province, 22 yrs old

Liliosa B. Codeniera
Purok IV, New Visayas, Conel, General Santos City, 53 yrs old

Erlinda V. Tan
[illegible] Subd., Koronadal City, 52 yrs old

Dante C. Gonzales
Montevista, Comval Province, Tagum, 34 yrs old

Raymond Bello
Bato, Sta. Cruz, Davao Del Sur, 26 yrs old

Arlene T. Abellanida
Km. 5 Purok 15, [illegible] Davao City, 24 yrs old

Cecille Cellona
Immaculate Concepcion, Lower Lubogan, Toril, Davao City, 22 yrs old

Janeth G. Baldelovar
Purok Pagkakaisa, [illegible] Tagum City, 32 yrs old

Rahma N. Factor
[illegible] Zamboanga City, 33 yrs old

Efren Marcial
220 Tumaga, Zamboanga City, 48 yrs old

Casim Tucay
[illegible] Parang, Maguindanao 9604, 64 yrs old

Danie M. Igharas
Kidapawan Mercantile, Kidapawan City, 25 yrs old

Neri S. Francisco, Jr.
Km. 126 La Esperanza, Tulunan, Cotabato, 28 yrs old

Judith J. Macabingkil
Aguho St., Poblacion Maragusan, Comval Province, 28 yrs old

Erwin V. Montanez
Zone [illegible] Suarez, Iligan City, 22 yrs old

Roy Baldijo
Brgy. 11 Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, 47 yrs old

Timoteo M. Pandan
Don Carlos, Bukidnon, 47 yrs old

Jimmy V. Labadan
Dumarait, Balingasag, Misamis Oriental, 58 yrs old

Labajo R. Virgilio
[illegible] Shopping Center, Brgy. [illegible] Del Pilar St., [illegible]

Siegfred U. Gonzaga
797 [illegible] St., Kauswagan, Lanao Del Norte 9202, 60 yrs old

Librado Razo
[illegible] Misamis Occidental 7204, 59 yrs old

Williza Jade T. Gutera
Zone 6 Buayan, General Santos City, 19 yrs old

Lucia C. Atienza
Brgy. 7 Buenavista, Agusan Del Norte, 46 yrs old

Imelda S. Catubig
[illegible] Zamboanga Del Sur, 18 yrs old

Rollel P. Ricaborda
Lam-an, Ozamis City, Misamis Occidental, 45 yrs old

Gloria Esturco
[illegible] Katipunan, Zamboanga Del Norte, 33 yrs old

Elsa Bansag
[illegible] Surigao Del Norte, 27 yrs old

Susan F. Taban-ud
San Teodoro, Bunawan, Agusan Del Sur, 31 yrs old

Edwin E. Vicente
Purok 1-A [illegible] Bayugan, Agusan Del Sur, [illegible]

Rebecca D. Bantugan
Claver, Surigao Del Norte, 19 yrs old

Hernan D. Bondoc
Purok 7, [illegible] Gen. Santos City, 33 yrs old

Pedro Alex K. Ranario, Jr.
[illegible] Glan, Sarangani Province, 50 yrs old

Nonie S. Miniano
[illegible] South Cotabato, 32 yrs old

Amadolyn B. Pagay
[illegible] Sarangani Province 9501, 19 yrs old

Ariel Caballero
Lower [illegible] General Santos City, 30 yrs old

Elisa R. Tomen
220 [illegible] St., Brgy. Ubalde, Agdao, Davao City, 24 yrs old

Veronico Pacheco
[illegible] Santos Ext., Cotabato City, 65 yrs old

Enriqueta Dela Cruz
[illegible] General Santos City 9500, 47 yrs old

Antero P. Narisma, Jr.
[illegible] Mati, Davao Oriental, 41 yrs old

Alberta Abad
[illegible] San Jose, Surigao Del Norte, 72 yrs old

Armando C. Valero
[illegible] Zamboanga City, [illegible]

Roselyn A. Isidro
[illegible] Store, Rainbow Subd., Zamboanga City, 27 yrs old

Fernando Casanova
[illegible] Cabadbaran, Agusan Del Norte, 44 yrs old

Maribel Macaya
Poblacion Carmen, Cotabato City 9408, 26 yrs old

Sannie K. Balawag
Pres. Quirino, Sultan Kudarat, 28 yrs old

Susan N. Bantilan
Poblacion Matanao, Davao Del Sur 8003, 20 yrs old

STORE OUTLET WINNERS

(4) FIRST PRIZES P50,000.00 CASH

GMA

Wings Store
Taytay, Rizal

LUZON

Nelson's Sari-Sari Store
Purok 7 Bo. Anislag, Daraga, Albay 4501

VISAYAS

Boy Kia Marketing
42 P. Burgos St., Tacloban City, Leyte

MINDANAO

Levie Store
Jasaan, Misamis Oriental

(8) SECOND PRIZES P25,000.00 CASH

GMA

Juliet Store
50 Isla Rd., Valenzuela City

Apolonio Store
Coral St., Tondo, Manila

LUZON

Eva's Store
Puzor St., Mayapyap Sur, Cabanatuan City

Kate's Store
San Jose, Bombon, Camarines Sur

VISAYAS

Michelle Variety Store
66 P. Gomez St., Tacloban City

Arloc Store
Talisay Public Market, Talisay City

MINDANAO

Conchita Bacar Store
124 Quezon Ave., Cotabato City

Mary Ann Paculdo
Purok 3, Lumbocan, Butuan City

(16) THIRD PRIZES P10,000.00 CASH

GMA

Angelique's Store
218 A Bonifacio St., Sta. Lucia, San Juan MM

Isetann Supermarket
Recto, Manila

Amaparing Store
Brgy. Marulas, Valenzuela City

JRS Store
78 Molave St., Proj. 3, QC

LUZON

Derby Pajo
Macaraya, Castilla, Sorsogon

Conchita Oco's Store
Ma-pun, Guinobatan, Albay 4503

Viola's Store
Brgy. Bical Purok 5, Rizal, Nueva Ecija

Josephine G. Portana
Bonifacio, Cabanatuan City

VISAYAS

Niknik Store
R. V. Sanchez St., Brgy. II, San Miguel, Iloilo

Triple V Store
Passi Public Market, Passi City, Iloilo

Vag's Store
[illegible] St., Passi City, Iloilo

Darwin's Store
Bonifacio St., Pardo, Cebu City

MINDANAO

Elizabeth Soledad
Purok Mabuhay, [illegible] Iligan City

Bad-as Comml.
Bad-As, Surigao Del Norte

Arklem Store
Purok 7, Sambulawan, Linamon, Lanao Del Norte

Julmar Commercial
Cagayan De Oro City

DOH-BFAD no. 0252-2003

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Trek Adums adventure racers show up rivals

By Trina Ibarle

TALISAY, Batangas—Team Trek Adums 2 showed its mastery of the wilderness by topping the Open category of the Buena Vista Adventure Race at the Buena Vista Nature Park and Country Club here Saturday.

Bannered by Taddy Festin, Billy Martinez Jr. and Ailyn Morillo, Trek Adums finished with a time of five hours 44 minutes and 26 seconds in ruling the event organized by the Metro Adventure and Recreation Club (MARC).

Urban Goats-Pitmann, made up of Leo Oracion, Nat-nat Benares and Claire Montemayor, placed second while Retzel Orquiza, Roberto Arevalo and Lea Latayan boosted Team MMS to third in the 14-team field.

It was a surprise win for Trek Adums, which relied heavily on Festin, the team's only veteran adventure racer. Morillo, a long-distance runner from Adamson's athletics team in the UAAP, is a first-timer while Martinez is an occasional competitor.

"There are only a few entries, but all of them were strong contenders. We never thought we would win," said Festin, who placed third in the Puerto Karera Race last year, of the field featuring former AXN Challenge winners and other veteran adventure racers.

The Urban Goats and Team Bikemate were actually leading toward the homestretch, but had trouble navigating the 12th checkpoint. Trek Adums was the first to straighten out its trail on the map and reached the finish line with a commanding lead.

"We overshot our map, so we had to backtrack and catch up," said Urban Goats' Oracion, a veteran of the New Zealand Eco-Challenge and the AXN Adventure Race held in Manila last year.

Team MMS clinched third after Bikemate was slapped a penalty for borrowing a bike when the chain of Paul de Vera's machine broke to finish the race.

Meanwhile, Gameplan's Tricia Chiongbian, John Aguilar and Mark Rodil of Team 3M finished the shorter beginners' race in 3:04:04 to top the fun category.

Second lieutenants Ricarte Dayata, Rony Keith Marquez and Concepcion Reano finished second while Adventure Society-AIG's Tonierich Casas, Ryan Denosta and Avigail Melicor settled for third.

Reano took a spill on her bike and suffered a sprained ankle, among other injuries, but gamely finished the race with her teammates before tending to her wounds.

Handicapped athletes special in every way

By Luige del Puerto

MENTALLY challenged kids stage their version of the 100-meter dash (above) while a medalist gets a congratulatory hug from his supporters.

JOAN BONDOC

GERALDINE Capuyan, a 29-year-old mentally retarded woman, has never let anything stand between her and her athleticism.

She has won at least 20 medals in various track and field meets for the physically and mentally handicapped in the country.

On Thursday afternoon, she saw action in the 4 x 100-meter relay, 100-meter run and shot put in the 10th Special Olympics at the Marikina Sports Complex.

"I want to compete," she said, smiling. "I feel good competing."

Geraldine was among 650 mentally challenged athletes who strutted their stuff in basketball, bowling, volleyball, athletics, swimming, soccer, badminton, table tennis and power lifting in the competition that started on Wednesday.

These athletes either have Downs syndrome, autism or are slow learners. Those with cerebral palsy cheer for their provincemates.

"This is a chance to show the community that mentally challenged persons can do it, too," said Alex Babst, chair of the Special Olympics Board.

"Society has always been highlighting their disabilities. There is a notion that mentally challenged people are helpless. We want to change that," he said.

One of the keys to Geraldine's success is the overwhelming support she gets from her mother, Juanita.

Juanita recalls how her daughter has always wanted to be an athlete even when she was still a Grade 1 pupil in a regular school in Cebu City.

"She would play and come home with bruises. It was when we found out she was special," Juanita said. "But no one can douse the fire in her to compete."

Unable to travel alone, Juanita accompanies Geraldine when she trains at Baseline, a powerlifting center in Cebu City, and when she competes in Baguio City, Laguna and now in Metro Manila.

Today, Juanita said she could not have been prouder of her daughter, the youngest of eight siblings.

Geraldine took up hotel and restaurant management, a one-year vocational course, in a state technical school in Cebu City. She is now awaiting regular employment in one of the restaurants in the Visayan metropolis.

Sports is the "magic word" for mentally challenged persons, according to teacher Delia Minosa of the Mandaue Central Elementary School.

At times, they become uninterested in doing homework or in reading books, but they always look forward to sports competitions.

"Many of them could not excel in academics. But they shine in sports, and it gives them self-confidence," said the teacher, who has worked at her school's special education center since 1990.

She said parents are often surprised at the athletic ability of their children.

"Parents discover many things, and when they do, you could see the sparkle and pride in their eyes," she said.

Among the country's top mentally handicapped athletes are Dwight Saldito and Roxanne Salve Ng.

Saldito won the gold medal in track and field during the 2003 Special Olympics Summer Games in Ireland; Ng won three gold medals in the singles, doubles and team competitions.

Badminton boom

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

TALK about corporate support to a booming sport like badminton and Dunlop comes to mind.

Dunlop, a renowned sports equipment developer and manufacturer, recently joined the growing list of badminton supporters by launching the Dunlop Badminton Range at the Palms Country Club in Alabang, with prominent personalities headed by former First Lady Mrs. Amelita "Ming" Ramos, president of the Philippine Badminton Association, gracing the blue-ribbon affair.

During the formal launch, members of the national team led by coaches Butch Oreta and Melvin Llanes strutted their stuff using Dunlop's new line of badminton racquets, turning what was a mere test of new equipment into an exciting exhibition matches to the delight of the crowd. The Red team, coached by Llanes, topped the four-team exhibition series.

In an interview, Mrs. Ramos said, "I'm inspired that badminton is now popular in the Philippines and that there are now many courts in the country. As a result, there are now a lot of national players who come from the provinces."

A mean badminton player herself in her younger years when she was a mainstay of the Metropolitan Waterworks System team, Mrs. Ramos stressed that badminton greatness could not be achieved by Filipinos overnight, but "things are moving forward."

Badminton ("bulutangkis" as the game is called in many-time world champion Indonesia) used to get scant coverage from the Philippine media compared with basketball and boxing. But it is now getting ample publicity and making a big impact on the local sporting scene. As a matter of fact, many warehouses have been converted into badminton courts, proof that badminton is widely accepted and flourishing in the country. There are now several courts all over Metro Manila and in nearby provinces, notably in Quezon City, Pasig, Makati, Mandaluyong, Valenzuela, Marikina and Malabon, attesting to its growing mass appeal.

MALONSO WRITES. From Julian Malonso, former president of the Philippine Olympic Committee: Why does POC president Cito Dayrit have to consult the IOC (International Olympic Committee) on whether to recognize the BAP (Basketball Association of the Philippines)? Maybe Dayrit does not understand the spirit of the IOC rule that prohibits government intervention. The decision of the court to recognize Bapi (Basketball Association of the Philippines Inc.) because of the Lina rider requiring the national sports association to register with the Securities and Exchange Commission is pure government intervention.

Dayrit even bypassed the IOC representative to the Philippines (Mr. Frank Elizalde) by going straight to the IOC. The IOC may think we are ignorant of the IOC rules. According to Malonso, a retired colonel, when the ruling body for basketball, the Fiba (International Basketball Federation), recognized the BAP, the POC should have followed suit.

***

BITS AND PIECES. As part of its preparations for the 2005 Southeast Asian Games, which the country will host, the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association is staging the 2004 National Open Invitational Athletics Championships on June 1-4 at the Rizal Memorial oval. Patafa president Go Teng Kok said they are focusing more on the junior ranks where potential athletes would be tapped for inclusion to the national training pool. Perennial SEA Games champion Thailand heads the early entries...BUMPED OFF. The usual National Cockers Association Monday-Wednesday derby schedule has been moved to Tuesday and Thursday to give way to the PBA which is now holding games on Wednesdays at the Big Dome... PBA NOTES. Dong Aranas from Ormoc City asked: When can we see PBA games in Ormoc? There is no signal from ABC 5. Another PBA fan from Davao (sender 0917831537) said in a text message: "*Pangit ang* coverage *ng* PBA *dito* (The PBA coverage is poor here)," adding that ABC should "improve its signal in his province." ALSO NOTED. The text messages of Romie Lozada from Bukidnon, the mother of Shell Ronald Tubid and Jonathan Ruby, president of World Link Couriers Inc.

SPORTSWATCH

Southern Ladies golf tees off March 10

THE COUNTRY'S top lady golfers take center stage on March 10 when the 41st Southern Ladies Golf Open Golf Championships fire off at the Bacolod Golf and Country Club at Hacienda Binitin in Murcia, Bacolod City. Defending champion Lora Roberto is expected to head the crack roster in the premier championship division along with former RP Ladies Open champion Carmelette Villaroman, Lina De Guzman, Lucy Landicho, Tracy Locsin and Aileen Rose Yao. A spirited battle for top honors is likewise seen in the other divisions of the three-day event organized and conducted by the National Golf Association of the Philippines. Events on top in the annual tournament, held in cooperation with the host club, are Classes A, B, C and D while the senior division features players aged 60-years-old and above. Registration for the event, sponsored by the DHL Worldwide Express, WWW Express, Gopez Corp., Sugarland Hotel, Philippine Sports Commission, Petron Corp., Directories Philippines Corp., Hans Bruhmann Jeweller, Casino Filipino Hotel, Mizuno, Mitsubishi Motors, Bredco, and Nestle Water Phils. Inc., ends today. Entry fee is pegged at P1,700.

Ilocos Norte guns for 5th IRAA crown

FOUR-TIME champion Ilocos Norte looked ready to dominate the field again in the Ilocos Region Athletic Association (IRAA) which kicked off yesterday in Urdaneta, Pangasinan. Ilocos Norte sports consultant Michael Keon said he expects teams from Ilocos Sur, Laoag City, Vigan City, La Union, San Fernando City, Pangasinan I and II, Dagupan City, San Carlos City and host Urdaneta City to go all out to end Ilocos Norte's supremacy in the annual meet, although he is optimistic that his team will rule again both in the elementary and secondary levels. "Rival teams from IRAA, especially Ilocos Sur, are out to dislodge us. They also hired trainers and technical people from Manila to upgrade their training but we prepared harder for them. We'll give them our best shot to stay on top," said Keon, the former Project Gintong Alay executive director. Keon, assisted by trainers from the province and Manila, personally supervised the months-long training of Ilocos Norte's top athletes at the refurbished Marcos Stadium in Laoag City. Ilocos Norte is fielding more than 40 athletes who are entered in athletics, swimming, gymnastics, taekwondo, baseball-softball, chess, sepak takraw, basketball and volleyball.

Calabarzon meet stakes 10 golds today

TEN golds are stake when the Calabarzon meet (formerly STRAA) starts today at the 5,000-capacity San Pablo Sports Complex. The finals on tap are shot put and long jump in both secondary boys and girls and elementary boys and girls as well as the 1,500-meter run in elementary boys and girls. Reigning overall champion Laguna is defending its titles in football, softball, taekwondo and archery. The meet formally started yesterday with San Pablo Mayor Florante "Boy" Aquino welcoming the more than 7,000 athletes to the competitions. Three new events—girls' basketball, siparnis and boxing—have been added to the meet calendar, jacking up the events this year to 18.

9-Ball Open billiards gets going

OVER 80 promising cue artists see action today at the start of the 9-Ball Open Championship at the Rommel's Billiards at Biak-Na Bato corner Retiro in Quezon City. The event, backed up by Star Corporation president and CEO Sebastian Chua, is open to all billiards enthusiasts regardless of age or sex. They have until 6 p.m. today to register. Registration fee is only P100. Participants will try to outdo one another in a race-to-5, winner-take-all format for the top 16 qualifying slots into the next round. The top 16 will be facing one another anew at the Star Paper Corporation compound for the title and the chance to compete in the Tanduay Search for the No. 1 Billiards Player and the forthcoming Corporate Billiards League Season 2. Interested participants can call up Rose or Luz of Rommel's Billiards at 712-3662 and 712-8931 or with the Corporate Billiards League secretariat at 0918-9219934 or may log on at the www.corporatebilliardsleague@yahoo.com for further details.

3 exec chessers hall of fame candidates

ACTIVE Chess Center of Asia, organizers of the Philippine Executive Active Chess Express (Peace) tournament, is considering inducting some of its past winners into a hall of fame. Lawyer Jose Ventura Aspiras, who holds the record for most victories in the grand finals; his long-time rival, dentist Jenny Mayor, a two-time grand final champion; and lawyer and police major Rommel Tacorda, who won five tournament legs in one season, are the initial candidates in the elite roll of former Peace champs, Active Chess officials said.

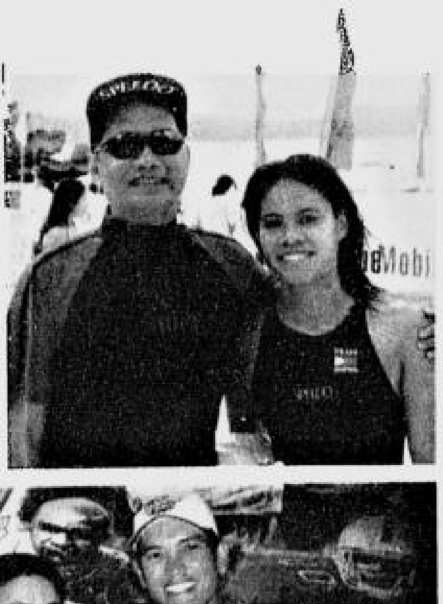
Manila Golf hosts OSHDP tourney

THE ORGANIZATION of Socialized Housing Developers of the Philippines Inc. (OSHDP) will hold a golf tournament on March 16 at the Manila Golf Club, with players from the Housing and Urban Development Mutual Fund (Pag-Ibig Fund) and other sectors of the housing industry competing. This year's invitational tournament aims to promote camaraderie among private real estate practitioners and their government counterparts, said Wilfredo M. Tan, OSHDP president. Tee off time is 8 a.m., with HUDCC Officer-in-Charge Amado Bagatsing and Pag-Ibig Fund chief executive officer Romero Quimbo hitting the ceremonial drives.

QC inter-school chessfest set March 20

THE ROTARY Club of Sta. Mesa, Quezon City, is launching the First Quezon City Inter-School Chess Tournament with the theme "Search for the Grandmaster" on March 20 and 21 at the third floor of Rotary Center on Roces Avenue, Quezon City. Club president Wilson K. Lim said the Rotary district project is endorsed by District 3780 governor Bobby Viray and city school superintendent Victoria Fuentes. For details and registration form, call the Rotary Club of Sta. Mesa, Quezon City secretariat at 373-9927 and look for Jenny.

BRIGHT STAR: Triathlon Association of the Philippines (TRAP) president Tom Carrasco with Josephine Pilapil, the fast-rising star of local triathlon. Pilapil won last year's Asian Aquathlon Championship in Boracay and is one of the darkhorses in the forthcoming Asian Triathlon in Subic.



SPORTS
GRILL

F1 IN FULL COLOR: National Sports Grill has teamed up again with MP Turbo for the 2004 Formula One season. With NSG's 30 television sets and three-sided Jumbotron, you get the feeling of being a virtual spectator in the qualifying races and actual race days. MP Turbo head and ace car driver Mike Potenciano (right) and NSG GM Ponch Zamora have promised to hold games and activities this year. Lucky F-1 fanatics who joined the last year's NSG trivia won prizes last season.

SHOULDER INJURY

Bryant could be out a month

BRYANT (right) grimaces as he is escorted off the court by Lakers' trainer Gary Vitti. REUTERS

EL SEGUNDO, California—Kobe Bryant could be sidelined up to a month with a sprained right shoulder, the same injury that kept the Lakers' star guard out for six games two months ago.

He also had offseason surgery to repair torn tissue in the same shoulder.

"We try to be optimistic, but it looks like he could be out for a while," Los Angeles coach Phil Jackson said Saturday after practice.

Bryant doesn't believe this injury is as bad as the one that kept him out earlier, and he apparently doesn't expect to miss a month.

"He was optimistic when he came in this morning, which is a very good sign," Jackson said. "He felt that he would be back in a few games, so he thought it was nothing like the last time when he had to sit out."

Jackson said Bryant will be reevaluated after the Lakers' next road trip, which begins Monday in Utah and ends Saturday in Chicago.

If Bryant has to miss a month, he still would be back before the NBA playoffs begin April 17.

Leading the Lakers in scoring with a 22.4 average, Bryant reinjured his shoulder trying to fight through a pick. He banged into Reggie Evans 54 seconds after tip-off in Friday's 99-91 victory over Seattle. *AP*

Stanford gets 1st loss

SEATTLE—The Stanford Cardinal never got a chance to pull off another last-second victory.

The top-ranked Cardinal lost for the first time this season Saturday, falling, 75-62, to Washington two days after rallying to beat Washington State on a buzzer-beater.

"Nobody likes to lose, especially when you have 26 wins straight," center Rob Little said. "We can't always have a miraculous comeback." *AP*

Odom triple double sparks Heat triumph

MIAMI—Lamar Odom earned the first triple double by a Miami Heat player in nine years with 30 points, 19 rebounds and 11 assists to help beat the Sacramento Kings, 102-96, Saturday.

The triple-double was the fourth in Heat history and Odom's eighth. He achieved a season high in points and a career high in rebounds, and he matched his career high in assists.

"That's my favorite part of basketball— getting triple-doubles and filling it up a little bit," Odom said. "If there's one stat I could have, that would be it, whether it's 10-10-10 or big ones like this. I'll remember this game for a long time."

Rafer Alston scored 20 points for Miami. Reserves Rasual Butler and Udonis Haslem added 17 apiece.

Mike Bibby scored 24 points and Chris Webber 22 for the Kings. Peja Stojakovic went 4-for-13 and scored just 14 points.

In Cleveland, LeBron James had 24 points, 10 assists and seven rebounds, and Zydrunas Ilgauskas added 29 points to lead Cleveland over Milwaukee, 106-97.

Carlos Boozer had 22 points and 13 rebounds and Jeff McInnis had a season-high 12 assists for the Cavaliers, who won their third straight. James also had four steals to go with another array of jaw-dropping dunks.

The Bucks were led by Michael Redd with 18 points and Brian Skinner with 15. Damon Jones had 13 points and 10 assists.

In Philadelphia, Kenny Thomas had a season-high 27 points and 11 rebounds, leading Philadelphia to a 97-88 victory over Chicago.

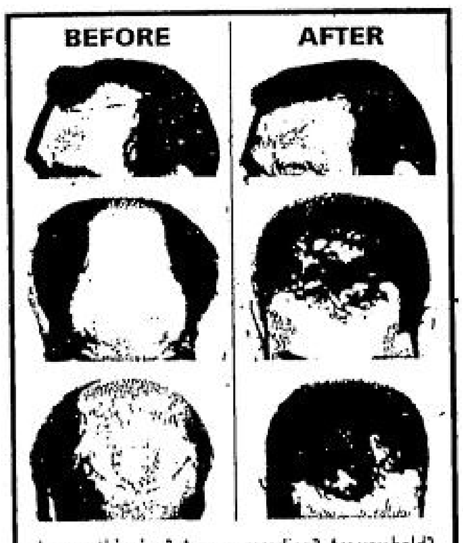
Allen Iverson had 20 points and 11 assists and reserve Zendon Hamilton added 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Sixers, who had lost 18 of 24.

Eddy Curry scored 24 and Jamal Crawford and Antonio Davis each had 16 for Chicago, the second-worst team in the NBA.

In Portland, Oregon, Zach Randolph scored 23 points as Portland beat Utah, 91-70, in a game marred by a fourth-quarter scuffle between the teams.

The conflict broke out with about five minutes left when Shareef Abdur-Rahim stole the ball from Raja Bell and charged down the court. Bell, in pursuit, appeared to try to pull Abdur-Rahim to the ground, then the Blazers' Ruben Patterson jumped into the fray and knocked Bell to the ground. *AP*

Complete results:Memphis 98, LA Clippers 92; Miami 102, Sacramento 96; Philadelphia 97, Chicago 88; Cleveland 106, Milwaukee 97; Detroit 97, Denver 66; San Antonio 107, Phoenix 86; Portland 91, Utah 70.



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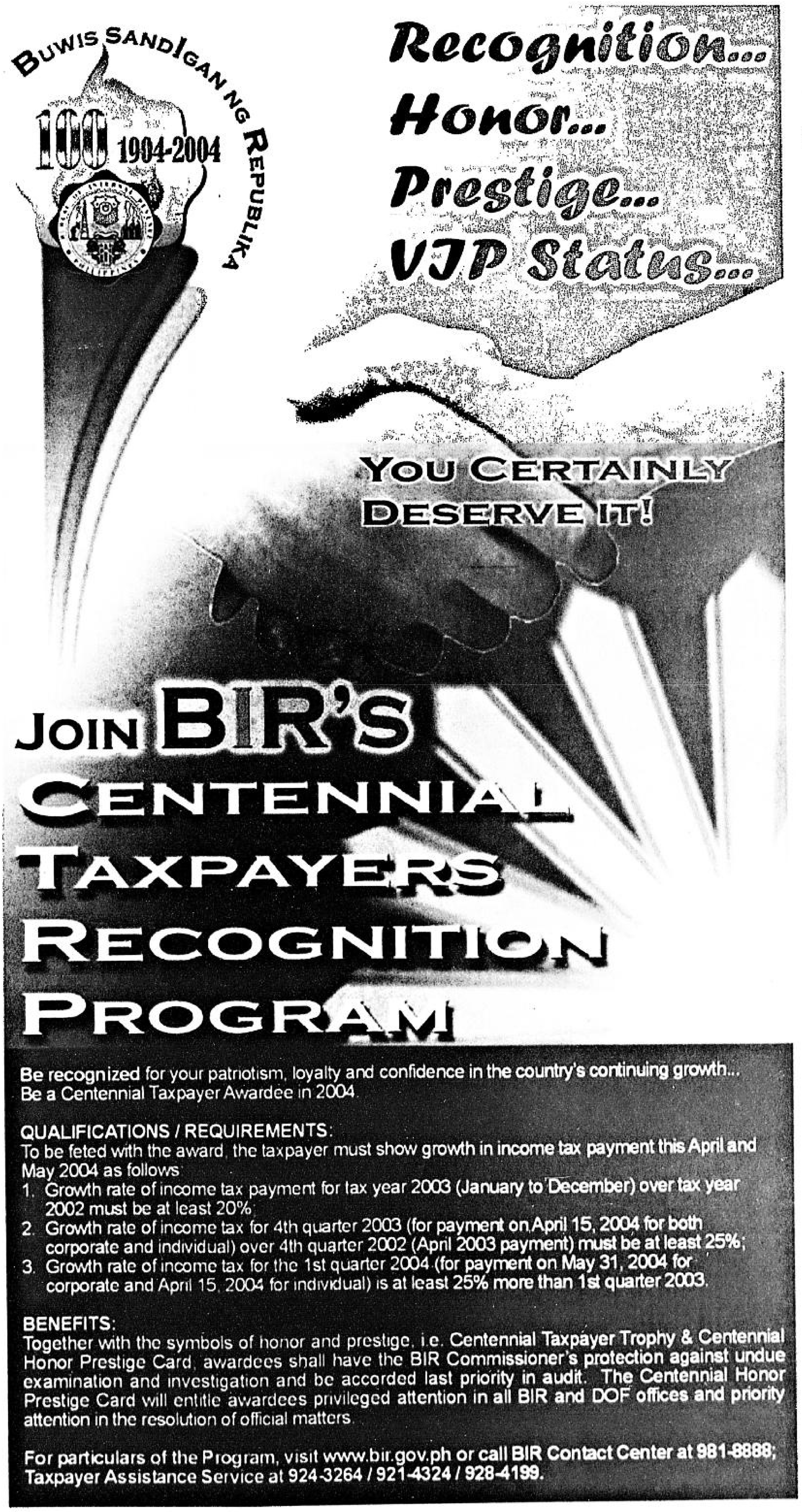

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QUALIFICATIONS / REQUIREMENTS:
To be feted with the award, the taxpayer must show growth in income tax payment this April and May 2004 as follows:

1. Growth rate of income tax payment for tax year 2003 (January to December) over tax year 2002 must be at least 20%;
2. Growth rate of income tax for 4th quarter 2003 (for payment on April 15, 2004 for both corporate and individual) over 4th quarter 2002 (April 2003 payment) must be at least 25%;
3. Growth rate of income tax for the 1st quarter 2004 (for payment on May 31, 2004 for corporate and April 15, 2004 for individual) is at least 25% more than 1st quarter 2003.

BENEFITS:
Together with the symbols of honor and prestige, i.e. Centennial Taxpayer Trophy & Centennial Honor Prestige Card, awardees shall have the BIR Commissioner's protection against undue examination and investigation and be accorded last priority in audit. The Centennial Honor Prestige Card will entitle awardees privileged attention in all BIR and DOF offices and priority attention in the resolution of official matters.

For particulars of the Program, visit www.bir.gov.ph or call BIR Contact Center at 981-8888; Taxpayer Assistance Service at 924-3264 / 921-4324 / 928-4199.

COMMISSIONERS' CUP

Success Story surprises favorites

ZARATE waves to the crowd as Success Story crosses the finish line. JESS YUSON

By Edwin Villanueva

SUCCESS Story used his blinding speed from the gates to stun top picks Red Star Rising and Free Wind in the Commissioners' Cup yesterday at the Santa Ana Park.

The far third choice in the betting, Success Story took off like a frightened cat from stall No. 1 to set a blistering pace and remained in front the rest of the way to complete a wire-to-wire victory in the 1,800-meter race.

"*Di ko inaasahan na manalo. Basta bilin lang sa akin ng* trainer *iuna lang. Salamat nagtuloy naman* (I didn't expect to win. The trainer just instructed me to get him in front. Luckily, he made it)," said star jockey Jeffril Zarate of his mount's surprising run.

Success Story, a lowly 10th among 11 entries in the recent Freedom Cup where Free Wind and Red Star Rising finished 1-2, rewarded owner Bienvenido Niles III with the P600,000 first prize courtesy of the Philippine Racing Commission which honored two of its former commissioners in the event.

First favorite Red Star Rising made another big run down the stretch but Success Story proved too hot to handle and settled for second spot anew, four lengths off the winner.

Free Wind, who mounted the only challenge to Success Story at the far turn, arrived third, then came Bulakeña, Hyperbid, War Hero, Dandansoy, Mica's Magic and Music Express.

Success Story, a four-year-old progeny of Conquistarose out of Sweet 'N Strong, clocked 1:54.4 (13.5-23.5-26-24.5-27). It was his 14th victory in 29 outings thus far.

"*Nakapag*-relax *sa pag-ayre kaya nang hingan ko meron pa* (He was able to relax in setting the pace that's why he still had enough horse left when I asked him for more effort)," added Zarate, who was also on board Success Story when the big, grey colt prevented West Bound from sweeping the Triple Crown last year by grabbing the Horseman's Cup.

As the far third choice in the betting, Success Story attracted only P57,529 out of the grand total sales of P1,159,988.

Francis Trillana, who was honored in the day's main race along with Felizardo Sevilla Jr., handed the Commissioner's Cup to Niles during the awarding ceremony which was also graced by Philracom chair Jimmy Dilag, commissioners Eduardo Domingo Jr., Vergel Cruz and Rogelio Tandiama.

In the accompanying Commissioners' Cup specials, Hermie Esguerra's Neat Laurel and Augusto de Jesus' Hantuchova topped their respective divisions.

Neat Laurel (Fraar-Salmon Laurel) overhauled coupled entry Ouzo in the last few strides to the wire to rule the fourth race.

Ouzo was all set to dispatch the fast-tiring Arriba King when Neat Laurel spurted from the outside.

On the other hand, Hantuchova (Slavic-Duet) rallied along the rail to prevail in the sixth race.

Handled by John Cordero and Lyndon Guce, respectively, Neat Laurel and Hantuchova collected P150,000 each.

Race body to probe champion jockey

LONDON—An allegation by a Sunday newspaper that champion jockey Kieren Fallon told an undercover reporter a horse he was riding in a race at Lingfield last week would not win is to be examined by the sport's disciplinary body.

Fallon, 39, has already been referred to the Jockey Club after losing a 10-length lead and being beaten by a short head in the race in question.

Ballinger Ridge, the 15-8 second favorite, looked to have the race at his mercy but Fallon seemed to take things easy with 200 meters left and he was caught on the winning post by Rye, the 8-11 favorite with Chris Catlin on board.

Angry punters at the Lingfield track, near London, booed and jeered the beaten Irishman on his return to the unsaddling enclosure. *Reuters*

Top seed Roddick gets door

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona—Fourth-seeded Vincent Spadea solved the powerful serve of Andy Roddick and beat the US Open champion 6-7 (5), 6-3, 6-4 Saturday night in a semifinal match at the Franklin Templeton Classic.

SPADEA AP

The upset of the top-seeded Roddick, the world's third-ranked player, sent Spadea, an ATP career non-winner, into his third final—the first since Aug. 22, 1999, when he lost to Nicolas Lapentti in Indianapolis.

"That doesn't happen every day or every year," Spadea said about the upset. "So it's definitely a career highlight."

He will meet No. 7 Nicolas Kiefer of Germany in the championship Sunday. Kiefer reached his second straight final when he outlasted upstart Romanian Victor Hanescu 4-6, 7-5, 6-4 earlier Saturday.

Roddick, whose serve was timed at 150 mph (241 kph) in January, hit 134 mph (216 kph) in this match. He had held service in 41 of 43 games of the tournament until Spadea broke him three straight times in the second set.

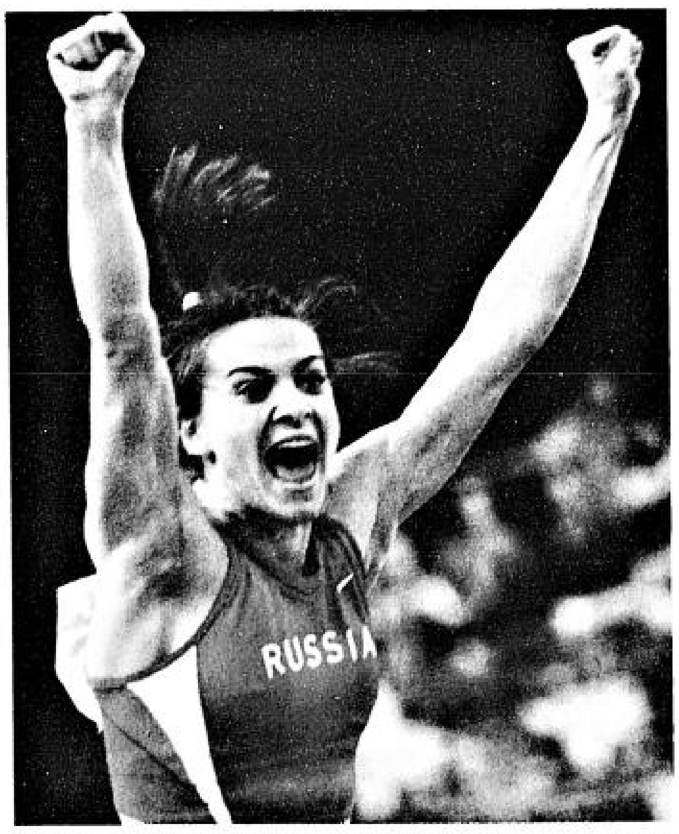
In Dubai, top-seeded Roger Federer beat Jarkko Nieminen of Finland 7-6 (7), 6-2 on Saturday and remained on course to become the first repeat winner of the Dubai Open.

The world No. 1 will face Feliciano Lopez in Sunday's final after the Spaniard overcame Russia's Mikhail Youzhny 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 in the first semifinal.

It will be the first career final for Lopez, while Federer will bid to extend his 2004 record to an impressive 16-1. He last tasted defeat against Britain's Tim Henman in Rotterdam last month.

Federer, meanwhile, extended his career record against Nieminen to 5-0 but the Finn had his chances, particularly in the first set in which he let slip three set points.

In Doha, Russia's Anastasia Myskina retained her Qatar Open title on Saturday, defeating compatriot Svetlana Kuznetsova, 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 in a 101-minute final. *AP, Reuters*



ISINBAYEVA celebrates her record-breaking feat. REUTERS

Russians crack world marks; Johnson wins

BUDAPEST, Hungary—Two Russians set impressive world indoor records and Allen Johnson saved his best for last to win the 60-meter hurdles for the third time at the indoor World Championship on Saturday.

Long jumper Savante Stringfellow gave the United States a third gold to match Russia in titles so far, going into Sunday's final day.

But the day belonged to Russian women. Yelena Isinbayeva cleared 4.86 meters to regain the world mark in the pole vault and Tatyana Lebedeva first equaled and then twice beat the old record to win the triple jump with a new mark of 15.36 meters.

Johnson appeared sluggish in the heats and in the semifinals earlier in the day. He finished third in both and only made the final as one of the two fastest losers.

But the American exploded when it mattered and produced a clean run to win by a big margin in a season-best 7.36 seconds to equal Greg Foster's 17-year-old US record.

"The semifinal was a total disaster, my legs went dead when the gun sounded, which worried me a lot for the final. I knew I had to pull out something out of my bag of tricks," Johnson said.

Johnson has a record four 110-meter hurdles outdoor world titles and was the 1996 Olympic champion.

His closest challenger this season, 20-year-old Liu Xiang of China, looked sharp in the preliminaries but was unable to stay with the American in the final. Bronze medalist at the outdoor and indoor worlds last year, Liu lowered the Asian record for the second time in the day to earn the silver in 7.43. Maurice Wignall of Jamaica took the bronze in 7.48.

Stringfellow won the long jump with a leap of 8.40 meters. James Beckford of Jamaica was second at 8.31 and Vitaliy Shkurlatov of Russia third at 8.28. Olympic champion Ivan Pedroso of Cuba failed badly in his attempt to win a record sixth indoor title, finishing eighth at 8.09.

After Pedroso's failure, 800-meter champion Maria Mutola is the only athlete still in line to win a sixth title. AP

Ronaldo's thigh injury hampers Real Madrid bid

MADRID—Real Madrid lost Ronaldo to a potentially serious thigh injury and had their lead at the top of Spain's Primera Liga cut to six points on Saturday as they were held to a 1-1 draw at Racing Santander.

Ronaldo limped out after 73 minutes of the game with a muscle tear. The Brazilian ruled himself out of Real's Champions League game against Bayern Munich next week and said he feared a lengthy absence.

Valencia took full advantage of a dispiriting 102nd birthday for Real by claiming a 3-0 win at home to Deportivo Coruna with two goals from Vicente and one from Juan Sanchez.

With 11 games left to play, Real lead the standings with 60 points, followed by Valencia on 54 and Deportivo on 50.

Barcelona, in fourth place on 46 points, can move to within a point of Deportivo if they win at home to Real Mallorca on Sunday.

Real took the lead against Racing after 28 minutes when Zinedine Zidane and Ronaldo combined to set up Santiago Solari but Yossi Benayoun equalized four minutes later, sweeping in at the far post when Real failed to clear a lofted free kick.

Carlos Queiroz's side had a couple of decent chances but David Beckham and Zidane were both off color, after struggling with illness this week, and, with Raul already missing, Ronaldo's injury left them with little hope of claiming a second goal.

"We had clear chances and we managed to keep the ball and control the game but we couldn't take the three points," said Queiroz. "It just wasn't possible."

Real had defender Alvaro Mejia sent off in injury time but Queiroz will be more concerned with the state of Ronaldo's thigh. *AP*

RONALDO lies on the ground after injuring his right leg. AFP

Pro kegler due for clinics, exhibition

THE PHILIPPINE Bowling Equipment Sales and Services Inc. is bringing in Brunswick professional bowler Billy Orlikowski for a series of exhibitions and clinics with local keg stars from March 8 to 12.

Pbessi chair Jesus E. Avecilla Jr. announced this yesterday after his group was awarded the exclusive distribution rights for Brunswick bowling products, services and support within the Philippine bowling market.

"We're extremely pleased to partner with Brunswick in the formation of this distributorship and to provide the quality products and services that Brunswick is known for around the world," said Avecilla.

For his part, Brunswick director of sales David H. Chertow said: "We're confident that Pbessi will contribute significantly to the ongoing growth of the sport and recreation of bowling within the Philippines."

Several members of the Brunswick sales and marketing team will be in Manila to attend the clinic of Orlikowski, popularly known as "Billy O," and watch him in action at the same time.

The event will be held at GameworX (4th level Festival Supermall, Alabang, Muntinlupa City) on March 8 at 5:30 p.m., and at Playdium (Araneta Ave., Quezon City) on March 9 at 4:30 p.m.

Pbessi is an alliance of five Brunswick-equipped bowling centers that include GameworX, Green Valley Country Club, Playdium Bowling Center, Sta. Lucia Bowling Center and CSI Family Funworld Bowling Center. The executive team includes Avecilla Jr. (chair), Edmund Lim (president), Aireen Robles (vice president), Pepe Sia (treasurer) and Allan Kua (corporate secretary).

For more details, call Pbessi at 850-3551 or e-mail pbessi@gameworx.com.

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Gov't warned vs debt-restructuring bid

By Doris C. Dumlao

FORMER Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Gabriel Singson has warned against renewed calls to restructure or renegotiate the government's burgeoning debt burden, saying this would not avert a debt crisis but again lock out the country from the global capital markets.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Singson, who took part in the government's debt-restructuring initiatives in 1970 and 1983, expressed concern over the proposal addressed by a group of businessmen to whoever would be elected as the next president this May.

"If we are talking now about renegotiating or restructuring our debt, how would you get to the market now to borrow some more? For sure, the government has to borrow some more, otherwise the reserves would drop substantially," Singson said.

As of end-February, the country's gross international reserves stood at $15.76 billion, down by 2 percent from the end-January level.

"Secondly, how will you restructure or renegotiate when most of the borrowings now are in the form of bonds in the hands of the public? You don't even know who are the holders unlike in 1983 when our lenders were the banks. We knew who were our creditors," he said.

In order to save the country from a debt crisis, Singson said the government must implement austerity measures and boost revenues through better tax collection and privatization of idle assets.

"We should show to the market that we are willing to sacrifice and bear the pain because I think we have over-borrowed," he said.

"If you are an investor and you are holding Philippine bonds and then you hear something like that—they'll restructure or renegotiate the bonds—will you lend again to the Philippines?" Singson asked.

The former BSP chief, who is now a director of the Gokongwei's JG Summit Holdings and chair/president of JG Summit Capital Markets Corp., said the two restructuring initiatives he had gone through were very difficult.

"It was very painful," he said.

In 1983, he recounted that the Philippines declared a debt moratorium, which was followed by several waves of restructuring until it ended in the issuance of the Brady-type or high-yield bonds.

"We were not able to go back to the voluntary financial market until 1992, the last quarter, and we raised only $50 million. So from 1983 to 1992, or for almost 10 years, we were shut off from the international market," he noted.

Instead of calling for another debt restructuring, Singson said the Philippines should prove to the market that it was willing to "bite the bullet."

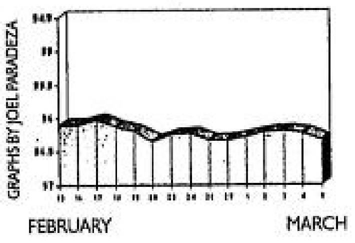
As an example, he cited the case of Brazilian President Luiz Ignacio Lula da Silva, who was initially shunned by the market when he was running for that position.

"He was a labor leader and was advocating populist views, so the market believed that if he becomes president, he might restructure or repudiate foreign borrowings. So, the Brazilian bonds dropped during the campaign," Singson said.

"But after he was elected and he was able to show to the IMF (International Monetary Fund) that he is willing to take reforms, the IMF supported Brazil and now Brazilian bonds are doing well," he said.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 56.345 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., March 5, 2004

¥ 111.18 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., March 5, 2004

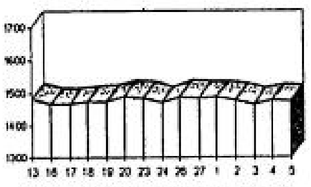
GOLD: $392.50-393.00

per ounce Hong Kong, March 5, 2004

March 5, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.819941	1.000000	56.2100
Japan	Yen	0.007384	0.009006	0.5062
United Kingdom	Pound	1.495162	1.823500	102.4989
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.105215	0.128320	7.2129
Switzerland	Franc	0.634187	0.773455	43.4759
Canada	Dollar	0.615202	0.750300	42.1744
Singapore	Dollar	0.478044	0.583022	32.7717
Australia	Dollar	0.617100	0.752615	42.3045
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.175025	2.652661	149.1061
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.218651	0.266667	14.9894
Brunei	Dollar	0.476655	0.581328	32.6764
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000096	0.000117	0.0066
Thailand	Baht	0.020758	0.025316	1.4230
UAE	Dirham	0.223235	0.272257	15.3036
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.219600	68.5537
Argentina	Peso	0.281525	0.343348	19.2996
Brazil	Real	0.283913	0.346260	19.4633
Denmark	Kroner	0.134199	0.163669	9.1998
India	Rupee	0.018112	0.022090	1.2417
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.215803	0.263193	14.7941
Mexico	New Peso	0.074880	0.091324	5.1333
New Zealand	Dollar	0.548859	0.669389	37.6264
Norway	Kroner	0.115501	0.140865	7.9180
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014337	0.017486	0.9829
South Africa	Rand	0.120622	0.147111	8.2691
Korea	Won	0.000701	0.000855	0.0481
Sweden	Kroner	0.108567	0.132408	7.4427
Syria	Pound	0.015896	0.019387	1.0897
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.024682	0.030102	1.6920
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000428	0.000522	0.0293

Lackluster trading seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

IT'S going to be the same old story for stock trading this week despite a temporary boost from a Supreme Court decision late last week, according to analysts and fund managers.

Investor sentiment eased over a recent Supreme Court ruling that effectively allowed movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. to run for president in the May elections.

"Can you imagine what would happen if he were disqualified? It would have created a riot and whoever won in the elections will be questioned. It would not have shown a clear mandate," said Marvin Fausto, senior vice president for Equitable PCI Trust.

When investors heard the news, the benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange index climbed more than 11 points or less then one percent to 1,474.07 last Thursday.

For the week, however, the Phisix shed 0.78 percent or 11.5 points to close at 1,471.65.

STOCKS/ B6

Gov't seen missing '04 deficit target

THE GOVERNMENT may exceed this year's budget deficit ceiling by 20 percent due to higher spending and lower tax compliance given the forthcoming presidential elections, according to UBS Investment Research.

In its Asian commentary dated March 4, UBS said the manageable fiscal deficit data in January eased fears that President Macapagal-Arroyo—the first sitting President to run for reelection since the Marcos regime--would be tempted to boost spending to increase her chances of winning.

"Although the January data indicated some deterioration over last year, the expenditure data indicate that government discretionary spending remained constrained," UBS said.

"That said, off-balance sheet spending may have increased in the period and which may show up as 'accounts payable' later in the year," it added.

The government reported a fiscal deficit of P16.1 billion in January, 15.6 percent higher than the shortfall over the same month in 2003.

"The deficit in January represents 8.15 percent of the full-year target of P197.8 billion, compared with an average January deficit figure of 4.6 percent of the full-year deficit from 2000-2003," UBS said.

GOV'T/ B6

INDUSTRY TURNAROUND

PAL sees ₱1B in profit

By Clarissa S. Batino

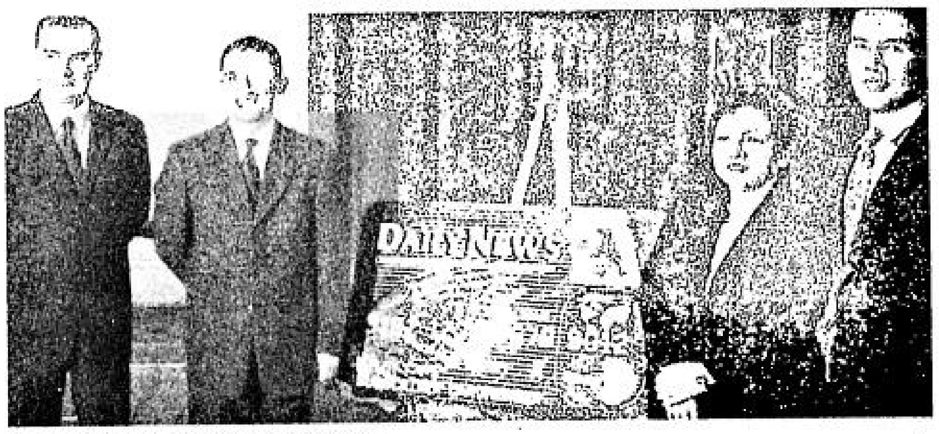
PHILIPPINE Airlines said improving appetite for air travel starting December could allow it to break even in its current fiscal year ending March.

The company's top official added that sustained traffic recovery would enable the flag carrier to net at least P1 billion in the coming year.

PAL president and chief operating officer Avelino Zapanta said that from earlier expectations of a P700-million net loss by end-March, the company was now looking to break even.

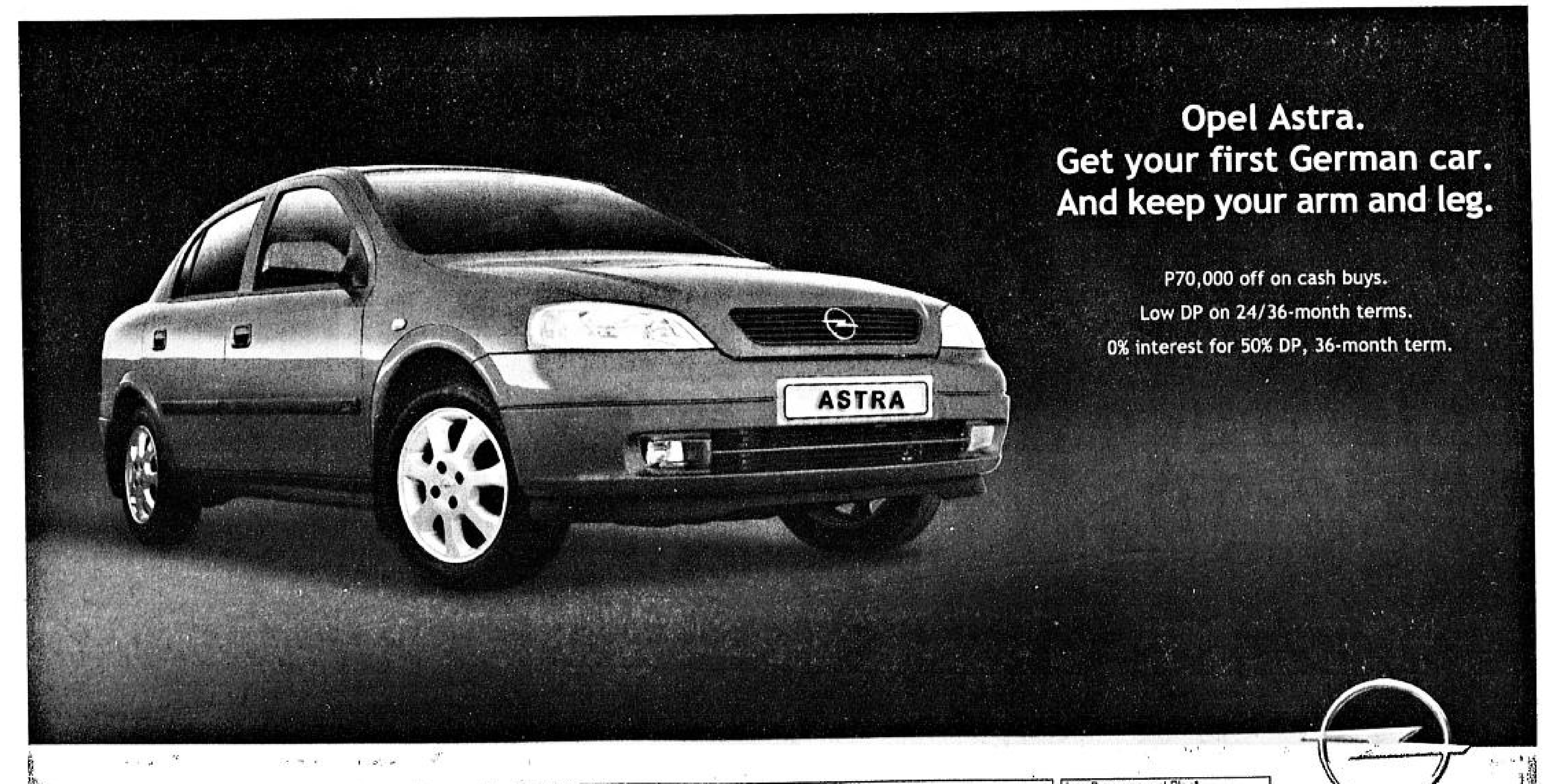
He said PAL saw a

PAL/ B5



CO-BRANDED CREDIT CARD

Mastercard and Security Bank, together with Cebu Daily News, launched in Cebu City the first co-branded credit card in the local newspaper industry. The credit card offers special subscription packages to its cardholders, as well as discounts and freebies at select partner establishments mostly based in Cebu. Shown in photo are (from left): Antonio Corro, director for operations and member relations, MasterCard International; Dennis Valdes, president of INQUIRER Publications Inc.; Belen C. Lim, president of Security Bank Card Corp., and Alex B. Reyes, VP for business development, INQUIRER Publications.



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1.6L Sedan Club AT	829,000.00	414,500.00	34,541.67	23,027.78	17,270.83	11,513.89

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Waves of change for Mindanao

(Last of three parts)

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

OVERALL, the Agriculture and Farm Modernization Act (Afma) provides a workable framework for agriculture modernization in the Philippines. The law responds to the need to address problems in the agriculture sector to make it better prepared for globalization and facilitate a considerable reduction in poverty in the sector. If implemented well, Afma can provide continuity to agriculture policy. Lack of resources has seriously hampered the full implementation of Afma. Often, crucial components of the program, such as the provision of support services and capability building, are sacrificed in the face of resource constraints. The long-term solution is to address the national government's fiscal problem. This requires a combination of measures increasing the revenue effort, principally through reforms in tax administration, as well as in changing the expenditure priorities to favor countryside development.

In the interim, various sectors have pushed for the selective implementation of Afma in Mindanao, wherein the Department of Agriculture must focus on the priorities and certain needs of the agriculture sector.

Peace

The holding of the 11th and latest BIMP-Eaga Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) in Mindanao on Sept. 10-12, 2003, as well as the 2nd Mindanao Working Group meeting last Oct. 20 are, to my belief, significant because it sent signals to both the international business and donor communities that security issues in Mindanao were and still are manageable.

Nevertheless, comprehensively resolving the conflict situation must remain on top of our agenda, with or without globalization.

ICT

It is important to recognize and anticipate "growth areas." in the information, communication and technology sector. I am sure you are all aware of call center sector and how it has been described by the DTI as the new growth area in the ICT industry. The mushrooming of call centers in many parts of the country—in Makati, Libis, Clark, Subic and Cebu have been providing employment for a lot of graduates. Unfortunately, in Mindanao, I know of only one call center which is in Davao City

We have not yet missed the boat on lthis, however. The rapid saturation of other areas in the country means we are next in line for call center investment. For this, we must prepare and develop the necessary facilities, infrastructure, services and human capital.

Infrastructure

Consistent with the globalization of the economy and Mindanao's participation in the BIMP-Eaga, the development of international gateways in Mindanao must be pursued as indicated in the Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP).

The Davao and Zamboanga airports will essentially play the role as alternate international airports to cater to different regional markets. As such, the development of the rest of the airports should be supportive of the role of these international gateways by providing the necessary air linkages.

Industrialization

Overtime, Mindanao shall graduate from an agri-based economy to an industrialized area. Its development strategy will also shift from cost-based advantage to one grounded on product differentiation. Its sources of strength will change from unskilled manpower and relatively abundant resource endowments to a skilled labor force, technological sophistication and innovative environment.

Mining

Mining could bring considerable wealth to Mindanao, providing jobs, developing local industries and improving infrastructure. In year 2000, for example, the formal sector of the mining industry employed a total of 109,500 individuals.

Hence, the development of the industry is seen as a means to alleviate poverty and spur economic growth in Mindanao.

Pertinent to industrialization, the minerals industry can foment the development of basic industries like petrochemicals and steel.

Industrial investment

Mindanao seems to have countered its negative image problem sufficiently to at least post some growth in industrial investment.

The Phividec Industrial Authority (PIA) in Misamis Oriental, designated by the government as the investment hub in Northern Mindanao, lured both local and foreign investors to put up new projects this year. Total Phividec-registered investments climbed to P17.1 billion in the first semester of 2003 from only P410 million a year ago. This represents a 40-fold growth from 2002 figures. Phividec-registered investments were mostly in manufacturing.

While this report is a welcome news, all

MINDANAWORLD/ B7

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A mother's plea

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE MATRIARCH of the Siy family—whose business interests include Jag and Lee jeans, Kenny Rogers, Popeye's, Seattle's Best, and Svenson Hair Centre—has written her quarreling children to stop their public wrangles.

"I am writing this letter to express my sadness and disappointment at the way our family dispute has been publicized by some of you in the media," Rosalina Siy told her six children.

"These articles put me and all of you to shame."

The letter, dated March 5, 2004, was addressed to "Nadine (the eldest, Bernadine), George, Wilfred, Angeline, Jackie, and Freddie."

The 74-year-old matriarch, who earned a BS Psychology degree from University of Rochester and a master's degree from Pennsylvania State University, hinted that the continuing media leaks chronicling the sibling rivalry were apparently also designed to dissuade her.

"Do not think that by doing this, it will make me change the decisions which I have made for the best interests of the family," she said. "I affirm the choice that I have made, entrusting to Nadine the unenviable task of resolving

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SC clears BSP officials charged in Urban case

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE SUPREME Court has dismissed with finality charges hurled against some officials of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas in connection with the closure of Urban Bank.

The high court, thus, upheld the decision of the Office of the Ombudsman to dismiss criminal charges filed by former Urban Bank president Teodoro Borlongan against BSP officials who ordered the closure of the bank.

The BSP's Monetary Board ordered the closure of Urban Bank in April 2000 due to insolvency.

In a resolution dated Jan. 21, the SC denied the second motion for reconsideration filed by Borlongan, which questioned the Ombudsman's dismissal of criminal charges against BSP officials.

Charged in the Urban Bank case were BSP Governor Rafel Buenaventura and his deputies Alberto Reyes and Ma. Dolores Yuvienco, Candon Guerrero and Tomas Aure Jr.

The Supreme Court also threw out Borlongan's first motion for reconsideration.

In its latest resolution, the SC ruled that the second motion also lacked merit.

Borlongan had filed a petition for certiorari with the SC following the Ombudsman's decision to dismiss the case.

"The determination whether a probable cause exists lies within the sound discretion of the Office of the Ombudsman," the SC said.

"We have more than once declared our reluctance to interfere in the exercise of that discretion absent of any compelling reason," the SC added in its earlier decision.

Similarly, the SC ruled against the plea of independent petitioner Benjamin Tabios on grounds that a previous motion for reconsideration has already been denied.

Tabios' case involved the alleged illegal transfer of over P500 million in deposits of National Food Authority from Urban Bank to the Land Bank of the Philippines days after the Monetary Board ordered Urban Bank's closure.

Tabios sued the BSP for an alleged attempt to falsify some documents.

Taxpayers rights pushed

By Michelle V. Remo

A TAX advocacy group is pushing for the legislation of the so-called Tax Payers' Bill of Rights.

The Coalition of Tax Advocates (Cota), composed of accounting and auditing practitioners, said the passage of the Tax Payers' Bill of Rights was necessary to address concerns of taxpayers.

These include unjust tax rules and practices, or harassment by some officers of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Joel Tan Torres, one of the lead convenors of Cota, said the group was in the process of drafting the bill of rights, which it will recommend to members of Congress for legislation.

Torres, a partner of auditing firm SGV & Co., said the current system of tax payment is not convenient for taxpayers.

"We want to do away with inconsistent and stringent rules that are a burden to taxpayers. It's about time our rights as taxpayers are recognized," said Torres.

Torres cited inconsistencies in the rules in getting clearances from the BIR for various purposes, such as business operation.

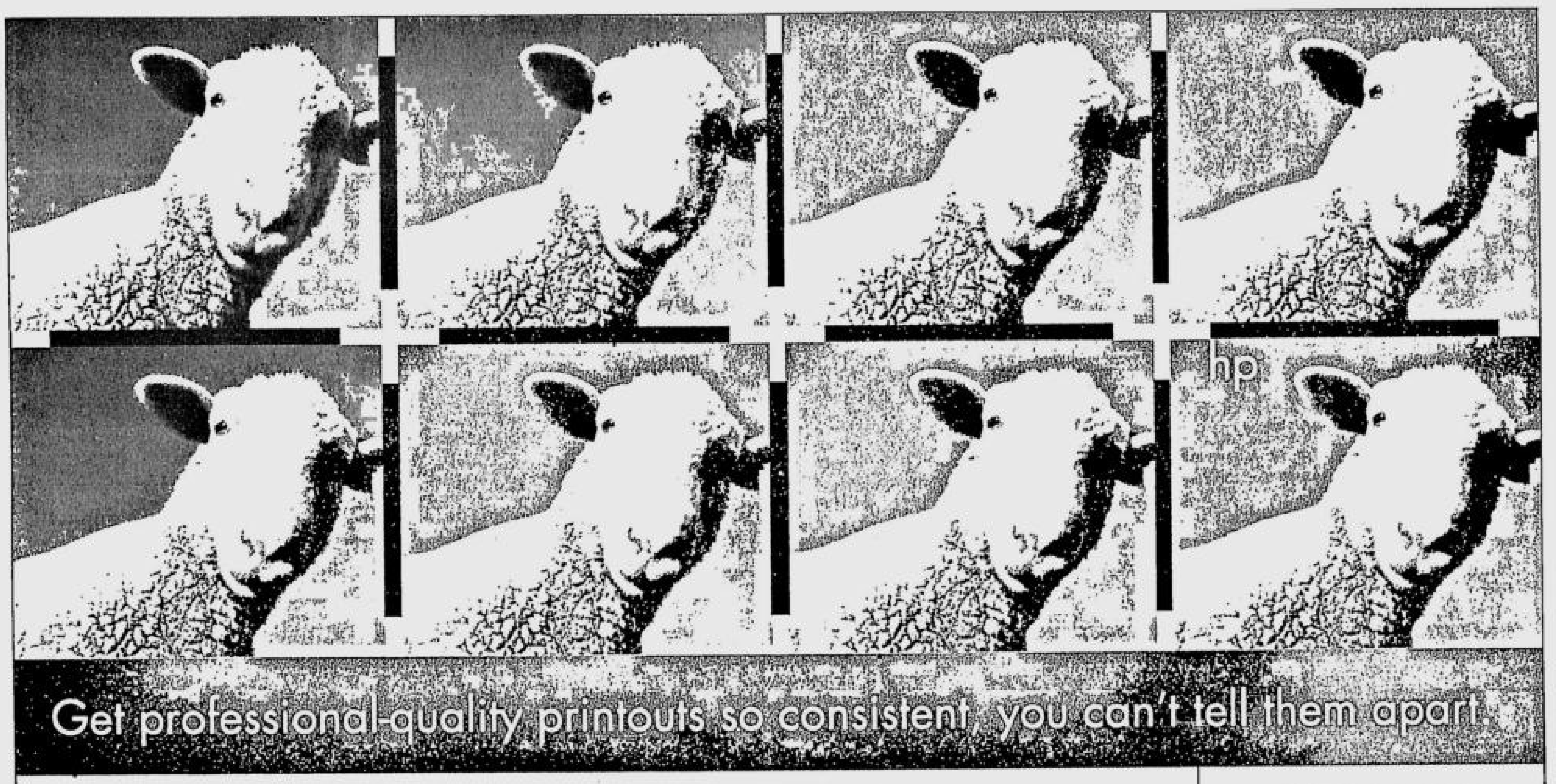
He said that while some taxpayers are asked to go through tedious processes in securing clearances from the revenue agency, others manage to go around the system.

"Sometimes rules become flexible depending on the taxpayers," said Torres. He added that the group is now working with the BIR to help address taxpayers' concerns.

Formally delineating the rights of taxpayers was also expected to arm them against corrupt BIR employees, the group said.

Torres said the Taxpayers Bill of Rights may use international models, such as the one used in the United States. A group of tax advocates in the US succeeded in having its own bill of rights legislated in 1996, Torres said.

Cota is composed of the following groups: Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, Tax Management Association of the Philippines, Association of CPAs in public practice and the BIR retirees association.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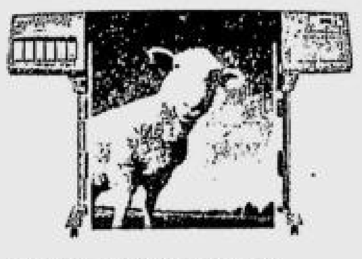

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Frightening numbers

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Cielito F Habito

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On our total debt stock to GDP ratio, we are not in such bad company. The United States has a level of public debt that is reportedly about 200 percent of its GDP. What really matters is the burden of servicing the debt. But here is where our problem now lies, and where we differ from the US.

One out of five

Government debt service for both interest and principal is projected to be P542.2 billion in 2004, which will take up 81 percent of our revenues. In other words, we are able to use less than one out of every 5 pesos of revenue collected by the government for current needs! Think of the poor wage worker deep in debt who is met by his friendly neighborhood "5-6" lender on payday to take away four-fifths of his pay envelope. Our government is now like that.

In stark contrast, our total debt service in 1997 was only P125.6 billion, taking up just 26.6 percent or about one out of every 4 pesos of revenue collected, leaving us still 3 out of 4 pesos collected to spend for current needs. It was actually in the last three years when the debt service burden accelerated most rapidly, jumping from 44.3 percent in 2000, to 75 percent in 2003, and now 81 percent. Clearly, something has gone terribly wrong.

The single biggest chunk in the public sector debt service outside that of the national government is due to the Napocor alone, which I'm told is projected to incur a loss of P170 billion this year, the bulk of which is due to debt servicing costs. And this does not even include the debt from the white elephant that is the Bataan nuclear power plant, reportedly costing the country $350,000 every day, the cost of which has already been taken over by the national government.

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Paradigm shift

The magnitude of the debt numbers should have jolted our lawmakers into urgent action on the needed legislation to improve both revenues and the efficiency of tax collection. But as they say, what can we expect of politicians primarily concerned about reelection and keeping campaign funds flowing from certain large taxpayers, both of whom cannot look beyond their self-interest and serve the common good of the country?

It is time to recognize that this state of affairs is leading us to financial ruin, and financial ruin would in turn lead us into a national disaster. We need a government willing to make a paradigm shift. We can no longer afford government leaders and officials who are prepared to mortgage the entire country's future for their own political or personal gains. There are bitter pills that we Filipinos must swallow as a nation in order to arrest the growing cancer within us. Ironically, it is the better-endowed taxpayers among us, for whom the pills aren't even that bitter to swallow, who seem most unwilling to do so. What we need is a concerned, competent and convincing doctor who will make us take those needed pills by setting the right example. That is why the choices we make on May 10 are absolutely critical.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

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The move also forms part of the company's expansion program aimed at boosting the company's bid to assert its leadership in the Philippine pharmaceutical industry and strengthen its presence in Southeast Asia.

In a statement, Unilab said the plant will break ground tomorrow, March 9 with President Macapagal-Arroyo as guest of honor.

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PAL sees ₱1B in profit

From page B1

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Zapanta said PAL felt the full impact of the SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) scare from April to November 2003 when the company incurred losses of P1.6 billion.

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The flag carrier nearly collapsed in 1998 in the aftermath of the Asian crisis that struck its major markets in Asia.

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"People are hungry to travel after being denied the pleasure when the SARS scare was prevalent. We think the coming fiscal year would be favorable," Zapanta said.

Among PAL's international destinations, the flag carrier counts the US, Japan, Hong Kong, Korea and the Middle East as its strong points.

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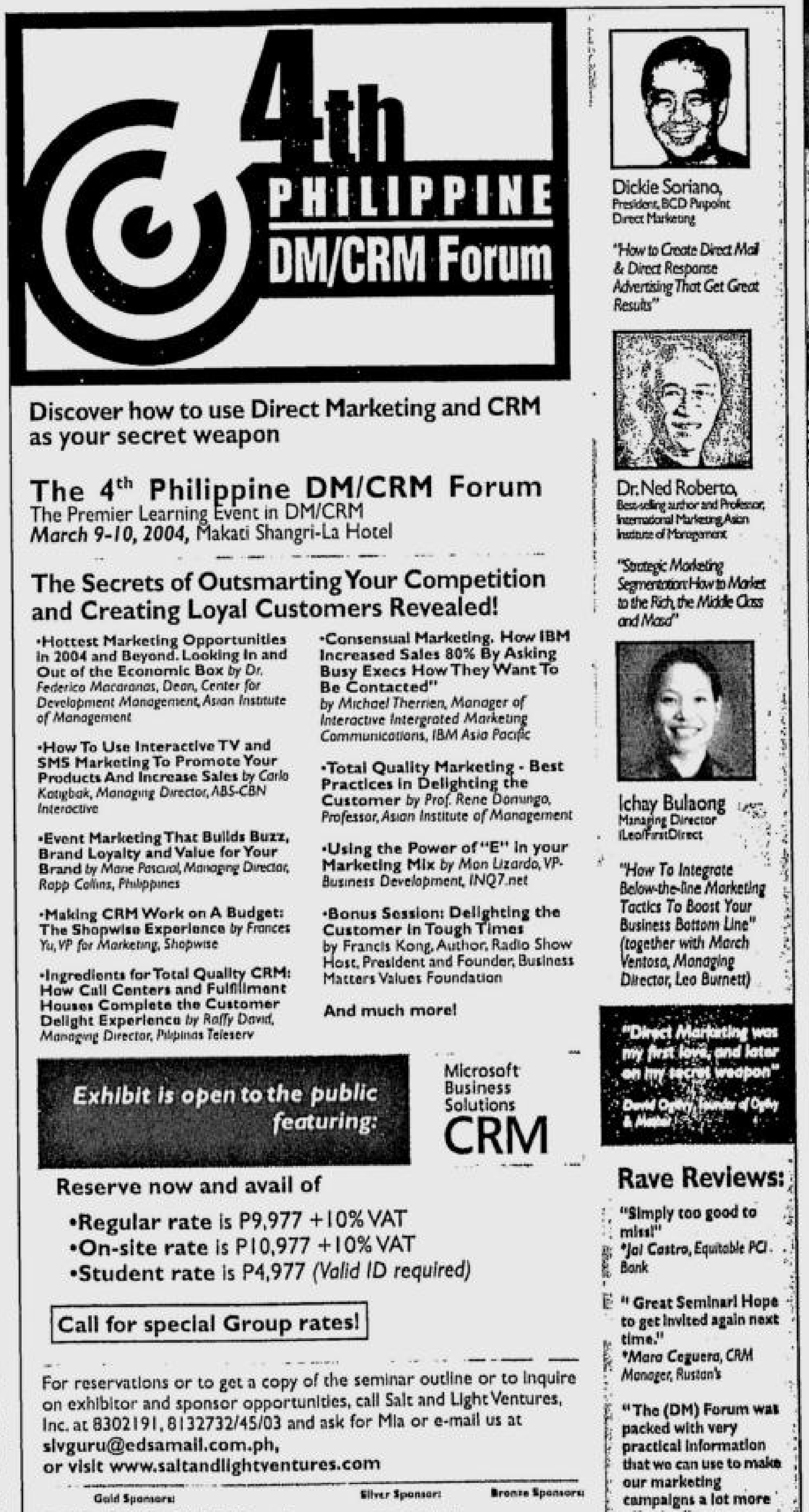
The Lucio Tan Group controls 89 percent of PAL. The government is left with only 4.26 percent, employees own 2.71 percent and the remaining 4.19 percent is held by private investors.



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- Total Quality Marketing - Best Practices in Delighting the Customer *by Prof. Rene Domingo, Professor, Asian Institute of Management*
- Using the Power of "E" in your Marketing Mix *by Mon Lizardo, VP-Business Development, INQ7.net*
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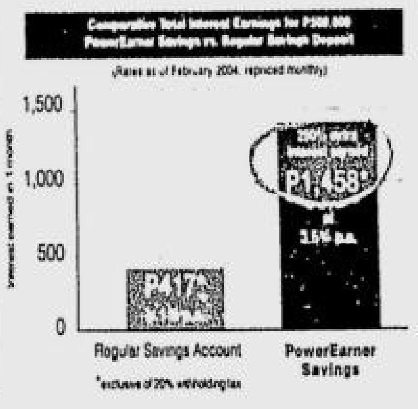

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1,000
500
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P1,458
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PowerEarner Savings
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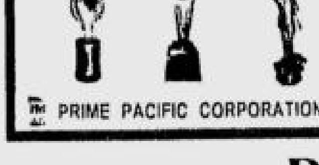

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PLDT's $450-M borrowing OKd

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has secured a fresh central bank approval for its planned issuance of $450 million worth of debt papers.

The planned borrowing, which was already approved by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, was originally set for last year. The borrowing was delayed and when the company decided to finally push through with it, the BSP approval had already lapsed.

The dominant carrier asked the BSP last January to extend the approval of the foreign borrowing. A central bank official said the request was granted and the loan approval was extended for another three months.

"The extension is good for 90 days so if they do not proceed with the borrowing, it may lapse again unless another extension is approved," said a BSP official.

PLDT's request to waive the BSP processing fee for the extension of the loan approval was also granted.

PLDT said that an aggressive debt reduction program had cut its debts to $2.9 billion in end-2003 from P3.2 billion in 2002.

The company said it aimed to reduce its debts further by $350-$370 million this year.

Of the total obligations, PLDT's fixed-line business accounted for about P2.5 billion while its subsidiaries such as Smart Communications Inc. and Pilipino Telephone Corp. accounted for the balance.

"We will stick to our debt reduction schedule such that by 2006, PLDT's debt will only be $1.3-$1.4 billion. Such a situation will lead to higher profitability and higher equity value," said PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan earlier.

Pangilinan said PLDT had received attractive debt restructuring proposals from banks.

"But our plan is to stick to our de-leveraging strategy," said Pangilinan.

The PLDT posted a net income of P11.18 billion last year mainly due to the P16.12 billion contribution of Smart.

Hesitant to let go of its cash cow, Pangilinan said PLDT would defer the public listing of Smart to 2006, at the earliest, despite the requirement imposed by its congressional franchise for the company to do an initial public offering not later than August 2004.

SM Prime sees 10% profit growth in earnings

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SM Prime Holdings Inc., the country's largest mall developer, is optimistic that it can keep up with its aggressive expansion program, as it is set to open four more malls in key cities and provinces next year.

In a brief interview, Hans T. Sy, SM Prime senior vice president for operations, said the company plans to open its biggest mall project, dubbed "The Mall of Asia," by 2005 and three more malls in San Lazaro in Manila, another in Valenzuela and Cavite.

SM Prime operates 17 malls nationwide and has recently opened SM City Lucena, SM City Baguio, and SM City Marilao in Bulacan. This year, it will open SM City Dasmariñas and SM City Batangas.

Sy also said that the company was expecting to post more than 10 percent growth in its net earnings in 2003 and another 10 percent this year from the contributions of its new malls in Baguio City and Marilao.

The company has yet to release its financial results for 2003.

Its net earnings expanded 11 percent to P3.9 billion in 2002, from previous year's level.

To prepare for its aggressive expansion plan in the next five years, SM Prime has so far acquired a total of 1.75 million square meters of land in 12 strategic locations, provinces such as Cavite, Laguna and Batangas.

The "Mall of Asia" is considered SM Prime's most extensive project. It will rise on a 500,000-sq.m. reclamation property in the Manila Bay area.

It is envisioned to become a premier shopping destination and tourist attraction with world class facilities.

In the first nine months of 2003, SM Prime said its earnings grew 8 percent to P3 billion, with revenue up 10 percent to P6 billion.

SM Prime is part of the SM Group of Companies, one of the largest conglomerates in the country with interests in commercial property development, shopping mall operations, retail or wholesale and merchandising, banking and financial services, and leisure or tourism and real estate development.

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Baguio Country Club	600,000	700,000
Camp John Hay	-	250,000
Canlubang	-	500,000
Capitol Hills	110,000	120,000
Cebu Country Club	1,100,000	Please Call
Celebrity Sports Club	-	200,000
Club Filipino	100,000	170,000
Eagleridge "A"	220,000	270,000
Eagleridge "B"	280,000	290,000
Eagleridge "C"	300,000	350,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	180,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	230,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	180,000	200,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	250,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	10,800,000	-
Manila Golf (Individual)	9,500,000	10,400,000
Manila Polo	2,250,000	2,500,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	350,000	430,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	530,000
Manila Yacht Club	200,000	300,000
Metroclub "B"	-	90,000
Mimosa (Individual)	150,000	Please Call
Mimosa (Corporate)	250,000	275,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	150,000	Please Call
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	-	350,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	250,000	330,000
Quezon City Sports Club	-	200,000
Riviera Golf Club "A"	-	90,000
Riviera Golf Club "B"	-	110,000
Riviera Golf Club "C"	-	125,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	70,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	-	180,000
Rockwell	280,000	380,000
Spa & Lodge	-	600,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,150,000	1,500,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,400,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	150,000	180,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	300,000	330,000
Tagaytay Highlands	700,000	750,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	700,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	140,000
Valley Golf	250,000	300,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,500,000	6,700,000

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CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	-	1,000,000
Baguio Country Club	-	650,000
Calatagan Golf Club A/B**	70,000	-
Canlubang Golf Club	430,000	-
Canyon Woods	-	100,000
Camp John Hay	240,000	-
Capitol Hills	180,000	130,000
Club Filipino	-	120,000
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	260,000*	-
Eastridge A/B*	-	70,000/90,000*
Evercrest	-	Pls. Call
Fontana D/C*/A**	70,000/140,000*/230,000**	-
Manila Golf Ind./Corp *	-	9,500,000
Manila Polo	2,400,000	2,200,000
Makati Sports Club A/B*	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Manila Yacht Club	550,000	-
Manila Southwoods A/B*	420,000	-
Metropolitan Club	110,000	70,000
Mimosa C2	250,000	-
Mimosa Golf Ind./Corp.*	180,000	120,000/250,000*
Mt. Malarayat Ind./Corp.*	300,000*	-
Orchard Golf A/B*/C**	Pls. Call	Pls. Call**
Punta Fuego	-	Pls. Call
Riviera Golf A/B*	120,000	100,000*
Rockwell Leisure Club	350,000	-
Royale Tagaytay A/C*	Pls. Call	-
Sherwoods A/B*/C**	70,000/220,000**	100,000*
Sta Elena A	Pls. Call	1,000,000
Subic Bay Yacht Club "Corp"	Pls. Call	-
Tagaytay Country Club	-	300,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	830,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	-
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Valley Golf & CC	280,000	-
Valle Verde Indv	140,000	-
Wack-Wack Golf	-	6,300,000

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Canlubang Golf Club	400K	
Celebrity Sports Club	170K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	280K	
Filipinas Golf & Country Club	300K	
Makati Sports Club "A"	180K	please call
Manila Golf Club (Ind)	please call	10.2M
Manila Golf Club (Corp.)	-	11M
Manila Polo Club	please call	2.3M
Manila Southwoods "A"	please call	please call
Manila Southwoods "B"	550K	
Manila Yacht Club		250K
Orchard Golf Club "A"	150K	-
Orchard Golf Club "B"	please call	please call
Puerto Azul Beach Club		70K
Quezon City Sports Club	150K	
Riviera Golf Club "B"		120K
Rockwell Club	320K	300K
Royale Tagaytay	please call	-
Sherwood Hills Golf Club "B"	100K	-
Subic Yacht Club	100K	
Tagaytay Highlands		700K
Tagaytay Midlands	680K	
The Country Club	please call	
Vally Golf CLub	250K	please call
Wack Wack Golf Club	7.2M	6.5M

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Meralco plans to consult PCCI on refund scheme

By Abigail L. Ho

MANILA Electric Co. is keen on meeting with members of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry to get additional inputs on the company's proposal for the fourth phase of its P30-billion refund of overcharges.

Meralco president Jesus Francisco said in a telephone interview Friday that it would be good for the company to meet with the PCCI before filing its proposal with the Energy Regulatory Commission within the week, as additional inputs could help in improving the company's proposal.

In an earlier interview, Meralco refund task force chief Leonardo Mabale said the company would file within the week the proposal for the fourth and last phase of its refund of overcharges, covering commercial and industrial customers.

Under the proposal, he said Meralco's big customers could either have their refund credited to future bills or, if they exceeded a certain volume usage cut-off, in the form of financial instruments.

He said the firm wanted to submit its phase 4 refund proposal to the ERC at the soonest possible time as it would need some lead time to have its financial instruments in the form of "refund notes" processed.

"It's to our benefit to have an early decision from the ERC so we can already work on processing the financial instruments," he said. "As soon as we get the approval, we'll inform our phase 4 customers so we can verify the refund amount with them and ask them how they want their refund to be done."

The fourth phase of the refund is the most costly for the Lopez-led firm as this will require the company to shell out around P18.6 billion to give back to its commercial and industrial customers the income tax charges passed on to them since 1994.

Mabale said Meralco had so far shelled out around P6 billion for the first two phases of the refund and for the first month of the third phase, which started January.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 5, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	16.75	16.75	16.75	16.75	31,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46	46	45.5	45.5	262,800
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	2,600
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	38.5	38.5	38	38	11,800
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.57	0.58	0.57	0.58	400,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	25.5	25.5	25	25	365,300
Philippine National Bank	23.25	23.5	23.25	23.25	2,500
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	10,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	2,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	20,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	150	150	150	150	10
Manulife Financial Corp.	2010	2010	2005	2005	620
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	50,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	155	155	155	155	51,170
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1505	1505	1505	1505	420
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	2,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.68	0.68	970,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	865	865	860	865	38,840
Ipeople Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	20,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.036	0.036	0.036	0.036	1,100,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	30,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.68	1.7	33,181,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	945	955	945	950	128,990
Ivantage Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	10,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	2,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	20	20	19.75	19.75	136,500
Manila Electric Co. B	32.5	33	32.5	32.5	238,200
Petron Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	404,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	31,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	300,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	10,000
William,Gothong & Aboitiz	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	3,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	600,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.4	1.4	320,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.35	3.35	3.35	3.35	50,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.25	18.5	261,200
San Miguel Corp. A	56.5	57	56	57	110,900
San Miguel Corp. B	69.5	70	69.5	70	65,800
Universal Robina Corp.	5.3	5.5	5.3	5.5	380,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	6,150,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	40,000
Ayala Corp.	6	6	6	6	4,071,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.05	3.05	3	3	25,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.96	1	0.96	1	1,770,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	60,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.64	1.64	1.6	1.6	40,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1	8,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	1,110,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.24	650,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	24	24	23.75	23.75	30,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	100,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	5,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.45	0.48	0.45	0.48	40,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.08	452,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	2,220,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	600,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	15,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	7,900,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	30,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	23	23	23	23	167,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.5	5,723,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	260,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.17	0.175	0.16	0.165	3,950,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	810,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.06	629,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	540,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	920,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.1	5.9	6	7,189,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	100,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	50,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	310,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	2,260,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	3,490,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	600,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	7,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	20,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	50,000

Gov't seen . . .

From page B1

"The figure is in line with our view that the deficit in 2004 will overshoot the target by around 20 percent, given the national elections in May, which is likely to mean increased expenditures (which may initially appear off-balance sheet as accounts payable) and reduced tax compliance," UBS stressed.

In relation to gross domestic product, UBS said it believed the government's fiscal deficit this year would reach 5 percent from 4.7 percent of GDP in 2003.

In January, expenditures rose by 7 percent while revenues expanded by 4.7 percent. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Lackluster trading seen

From page B1

Fausto said market players would continue to watch independent surveys on who's edging out who in the presidential race.

"I think the market would still trade sideways with no surprises in the corporate earnings and economic fronts," Fausto said.

Exports grew 4.1 percent in January, disappointing some analysts who expected growth of at least 10 percent. Inflation or the rise in prices of goods and services hit 3.4 percent for February, little changed from the previous month's.

"The latest reports provided little evidence that the economy is strengthening," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities Inc.

Vistan said stocks would continue to drift sideways as investors await further signs of a pickup in the economy and political stability.

"Even with a lower cost of trading due to the suspension of the documentary stamp tax, enthusiasm is likely to be limited due to the lack of a real impetus to trade. After the FPJ issue, investors will be faced with a vacuum in terms of market-moving factors. Generally good economic news and strong fourth-quarter earnings have raised optimism about the current economic recovery, but worries on domestic politics and US interest rates will persist," Vistan said.

Fausto said he expected first-quarter corporate earnings to be flat with prices of goods moderately up and this might pull back consumer demand and affect corporate profits.

Among the week's movers included Pilipino Telephone Corp., which rose to P1.70 from P1.56 last week, and Manila Electric Co., which rose to P19.75 from P19.50. Meralco said it was allowed by its short-term lenders to roll over short-term loans amounting to $79.2 million or P4.4 billion until June 2004. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

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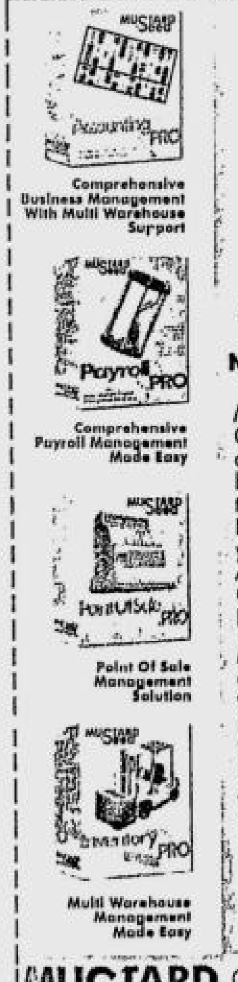

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Cocktales

From page B3

the issues peacefully and for the best interest of all of us."

With the untimely death of her husband, textile magnate Ramon Siy Lay, Mrs. Siy has had to increasingly rely on Bernadine, the eldest child and, who, incidentally, still lives with her, to oversee the family's varied business empire. This decision, however, did not sit well with George, the second child, and two other siblings.

"By going to the courts to question the validity of the authority I have entrusted to your sister, you are jeopardizing the entire family's welfare," Mrs. Siy said.

The rest of the letter continues:

"The use of assets bequeathed to us by your father to hurt the family's own business interests and your own siblings is the height of irresponsibility and presumptuousness. The sooner you start acting responsibly, the sooner we can sit down to resolve our differences, and allow Nadine to preside over the resolution to our family business.

"Everyday, I pray for a peaceful resolution to our dispute. I also pray that you will realize that such a resolution will never be possible for as long as our family's affairs are maliciously exploited to provide entertainment for the public."

According to the grapevine, Mrs. Siy, a former stockbroker, still drives her car notwithstanding her age and goes to Mass every day.

Short takes

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(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PLDT's $450-M borrowing OKd

By Clarissa S. Batino

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has secured a fresh central bank approval for its planned issuance of $450 million worth of debt papers.

The planned borrowing, which was already approved by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, was originally set for last year. The borrowing was delayed and when the company decided to finally push through with it, the BSP approval had already lapsed.

The dominant carrier asked the BSP last January to extend the approval of the foreign borrowing. A central bank official said the request was granted and the loan approval was extended for another three months.

"The extension is good for 90 days so if they do not proceed with the borrowing, it may lapse again unless another extension is approved," said a BSP official.

PLDT's request to waive the BSP processing fee for the extension of the loan approval was also granted.

PLDT said that an aggressive debt reduction program had cut its debts to $2.9 billion in end-2003 from P3.2 billion in 2002.

The company said it aimed to reduce its debts further by $350-$370 million this year.

Of the total obligations, PLDT's fixed-line business accounted for about P2.5 billion while its subsidiaries such as Smart Communications Inc. and Pilipino Telephone Corp. accounted for the balance.

"We will stick to our debt reduction schedule such that by 2006, PLDT's debt will only be $1.3-$1.4 billion. Such a situation will lead to higher profitability and higher equity value," said PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan earlier.

Pangilinan said PLDT had received attractive debt restructuring proposals from banks.

"But our plan is to stick to our de-leveraging strategy," said Pangilinan.

The PLDT posted a net income of P11.18 billion last year mainly due to the P16.12 billion contribution of Smart.

Hesitant to let go of its cash cow, Pangilinan said PLDT would defer the public listing of Smart to 2006, at the earliest, despite the requirement imposed by its congressional franchise for the company to do an initial public offering not later than August 2004.

SM Prime sees 10% profit growth in earnings

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SM Prime Holdings Inc., the country's largest [illegible] developer, is optimistic that it can keep with its aggressive expansion program, as [illegible] set to open four more malls in key cities and provinces next year.

In a brief interview, Hans T. Sy, SM Prime senior vice president for operations, said the company plans to open its biggest mall project, dubbed "The Mall of Asia," by 2005 and three more malls in San Lazaro in Manila, another in Valenzuela and Cavite.

SM Prime operates 17 malls nationwide and has recently opened SM City Lucena, SM City Baguio, and SM City Marilao in Bulacan. This year, it will open SM City Dasmariñas and SM City Batangas.

Sy also said that the company was expecting to post more than 10 percent growth in its net earnings in 2003 and another 10 percent this year from the contributions of its new malls in Baguio City and Marilao.

The company has yet to release its financial results for 2003.

Its net earnings expanded 11 percent to P3.9 billion in 2002, from previous year's level.

To prepare for its aggressive expansion plan in the next five years, SM Prime has so far acquired a total of 1.75 million square meters of land in 12 strategic locations, provinces such as Cavite, Laguna and Batangas.

The "Mall of Asia" is considered SM Prime's most extensive project. It will rise on a 500,000-sq.m. reclamation property in the Manila Bay area.

It is envisioned to become a premier shopping destination and tourist attraction with world class facilities.

In the first nine months of 2003, SM Prime said its earnings grew 8 percent to P3 billion, with revenue up 10 percent to P6 billion.

SM Prime is part of the SM Group of Companies, one of the largest conglomerates in the country with interests in commercial property development, shopping mall operations, retail or wholesale and merchandising, banking and financial services, and leisure or tourism and real estate development.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 5, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ Bank	16 75	16 75	16 75	16 75	31,300
Bank of the Phil Islands	46	46	45 5	45 5	262,800
Citystate Savings Bank	16 25	16 25	16 25	16 25	2,600
Equitable PCI Bank Inc	38 5	38 5	38	38	11,800
Export and Ind Bank Inc.	0 57	0 58	0 57	0 58	400,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	25 5	25 5	25	25	365,300
Philippine National Bank	23 25	23 5	23 25	23 25	2,500
Phil Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	10,000
Rizal Comm Banking Corp.	12 5	12 5	12 5	12 5	2,000
Union Bank of the Phil	26 5	26 5	26 5	26 5	20,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest Corp.	150	150	150	150	10
Manulife Financial Corp	2010	2010	2005	2005	620
PCI Leasing & Fin Inc	1 32	1 32	1 32	1 32	50,000
Phil Stock Exchange Inc	155	155	155	155	51,170
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1505	1505	1505	1505	420
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	22 75	22 75	22 75	22 75	2,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0 69	0 69	0 68	0 68	970,000
Globe Telecom Inc	865	865	860	865	38,840
Ipeople Inc	1 1	1 1	1 1	1 1	20,000
ISM Communications Corp	0 036	0 036	0 036	0 036	1,100,000
Manila Bulletin Pub Corp	2 65	2 65	2 65	2 65	30,000
Pilipino Tel Corp	1 74	1 74	1 68	1 7	33,181,000
Phil Long Dis Tel Co	945	955	945	950	128,990
Ivantage Corp	0 34	0 34	0 34	0 34	10,000
Philweb Corp	0 011	0 011	0 011	0 011	2,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co A	20	20	19 75	19 75	136,500
Manila Electric Co B	32 5	32 5	32 5	32 5	238,200
Petron Corp	3 15	3 15	3 15	3 15	404,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3 15	3 15	3 15	3 15	31,000
Keppel Phils Marine Inc	0 27	0 27	0 27	0 27	300,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	10,000
William Gothong & Aboitiz	2 5	2 5	2 5	2 5	3,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip Inc.	0 3	0 3	0 3	0 3	600,000
Union Cement Corp	1 4	1 42	1 4	1 4	320,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp	3 35	3 35	3 35	3 35	50,000
Jollibee Foods Corp	18 75	18 75	18 25	18 5	261,200
San Miguel Corp A	56 5	57	56	57	110,900
San Miguel Corp B	69 5	70	69 5	70	65,800
Universal Robina Corp	5 3	5 5	5 3	5 5	380,000
Vitarich Corp	0 26	0 26	0 26	0 26	6,150,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0 29	0 29	0 29	0 29	40,000
Ayala Corp	6	6	6	6	4,071,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3 05	3 05	3	3	25,000
A Soriano Corp	0 96	1	0 96	1	1,770,000
Alcorn Gold Res Corp	0 005	0 005	0 005	0 005	60,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc	1 64	1 64	1 6	1 6	40,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc	9 1	9 1	9 1	9 1	8,000
Benpres Holdings Corp	0 6	0 6	0 59	0 59	1,110,000
DMCI Holdings Inc	0 24	0 24	0 23	0 24	650,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	24	24	23 75	23 75	30,000
House Of Investments Inc	0 45	0 45	0 45	0 45	100,000
J G Summit Holdings Inc	1 88	1 88	1 88	1 88	5,000
Macroasia Corp	0 45	0 48	0 45	0 48	40,000
Megaworld Corp	1 1	1 1	1 06	1 08	452,000
Metro Pacific Corp	0 29	0 29	0 29	0 29	2,220,000
Roxas Holdings Inc	0 95	0 95	0 95	0 95	600,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc	0 06	0 06	0 06	0 06	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc A	1 9	1 9	1 9	1 9	15,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp	1 06	1 06	1 06	1 06	7,900,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp	0 48	0 48	0 48	0 48	30,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs Corp (Pdr)	23	23	23	23	167,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10 5	10 5	10 5	10 5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10 5	10 5	10 5	10 5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10 5	10 5	10 5	10 5	1,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10 5	10 5	10 5	10 5	1,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10 5	10 5	10 5	10 5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10 5	10 5	10 5	10 5	1,600
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc	5 5	[illegible]	5 5	5 5	5,723,000
C & P Homes Inc	0 14	0 14	0 14	0 14	260,000
Cyber Bay Corp	0 17	0 175	0 16	0 165	3,950,000
Empire East Land Inc	0 21	0 21	0 205	0 205	810,000
Filinvest Land Inc	1 06	1 08	1 06	1 06	629,000
Kuok Phil Properties	0 17	0 17	0 17	0 17	540,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc	0 18	0 18	0 18	0 18	920,000
SM Prime Holdings I	[illegible]	6 1	5 9	6	7,189,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co Inc A	[illegible]	[illegible]	0 1	0 1	100,000
Atlas Cons Min & Dev't	1 04	[illegible]	1 04	1 04	50,000
Lepanto Cons Mng Co A	0 21	0 21	0 205	0 205	310,000
Lepanto Cons Mng Co B	0 25	0 25	0 25	0 25	2,260,000
Manila Mining Corp B	0 0065	0 0065	0 0065	0 0065	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp A	0 38	0 38	0 38	0 38	3,490,000
Philex Mining Corp B	0 42	0 42	0 42	0 42	600,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet & Min A	0 003	0 003	0 003	0 003	7,000,000
Oriental Pet & Min B	0 003	0 003	0 003	0 003	20,000,000
The Philodrill Corp A	0 15	0 15	0 15	0 15	20,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0 14	0 14	0 14	0 14	50,000

sharexchange
[illegible]

SELLERS		BUYERS	
BAGUIO CC	660K	MANILA POLO	2.32M
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MLA POLO	Call now	TAG MIDLANDS	Call now

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CLUB	BUYER	SELLER
[illegible] Club "A" Filipino	1,000,000	1,200,000
[illegible] Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,100,000	1,300,000
[illegible] Club	600,000	700,000
[illegible]		250,000
		500,000
	110,000	[illegible]
[illegible] Club	1,100,000	Please Call
[illegible] Club		200,000
	100,000	170,000
	220,000	270,000
	260,000	290,000
	300,000	350,000
		180,000
		230,000
		250,000
[illegible] "A"	180,000	200,000
[illegible] "B"		250,000
[illegible] (Corporate)	10,800,000	-
[illegible] (Individual)	9,500,000	10,400,000
	2,250,000	2,500,000
[illegible] Southwoods "A"	350,000	430,000
[illegible] Southwoods "B"		530,000
[illegible] Yacht Club	200,000	300,000
[illegible] "B"		90,000
[illegible] (Individual)	150,000	Please Call
Mimosa (Corporate)	250,000	275,000
[illegible] Malarayat Gold "A"	150,000	Please Call
[illegible] Malarayat Gold "C"	-	350,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	250,000	330,000
Quezon City Sports Club		200,000
[illegible] Golf Club "A"		90,000
[illegible] Golf Club "B"		110,000
[illegible] Golf Club "C"		125,000
[illegible] Hills "A"	-	70,000
[illegible] Hills "C"		180,000
[illegible]	280,000	380,000
[illegible] & Lodge	-	600,000
[illegible] Elena "A"	1,150,000	1,500,000
[illegible] Elena "B"	1,400,000	-
[illegible] Bay Yacht (Corporate)	150,000	180,000
[illegible] Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	300,000	330,000
Tagaytay Highlands	700,000	750,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	700,000
[illegible] Verde (Individual)	100,000	140,000
[illegible] Golf	250,000	300,000
[illegible] Wack Golf Club	6,500,000	6,700,000

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As of March 8, 2004

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*		1,000,000
Baguio Country Club		650,000
[illegible] Golf Club A/B**	70,000	
Canlubang Golf Club	430,000	
Canyon Woods	-	100,000
Camp John Hay	240,000	
Capitol Hills	160,000	130,000
Club Filipino	-	120,000
Eagleridge A,B*,C*	280,000*	
Eastridge A,B*		70,000/90,000*
Everest	-	Pls Call
Fontana D,C*,A**	38,000/48,000*/230,000**	
Manila Golf Ind./Corp.*		9,500,000
Manila Polo	2,400,000	2,200,000
Makati Sports Club A/B*	Pls Call	Pls Call
Manila Yacht Club	550,000	
Manila Southwoods A/B*	430,000	
Metropolitan Club	110,000	[illegible]
Mimosa C?	250,000	
Mimosa Golf Ind./Corp.*	180,000	120,000/250,000*
Mt. Malarayat Ind./Corp.*	300,000*	
Orchard Golf A,B*,C**	Pls Call	Pls Call**
Punta Fuego	-	Pls Call
Riviera Golf A,B*	120,000	100,000*
Rockwell Leisure Club	350,000	
Royale Tagaytay A/C*	Pls Call	
Sherwoods A,B*,C**	70,000/220,000**	100,000*
Sta Elena A	Pls Call	1,000,000
Subic Bay Yacht Club "Corp"	Pls Call	
Tagaytay Country Club	-	300,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	830,000	
Tagaytay Midlands	720,000	
The Country Club	[illegible]	
Valley Golf & CC	280,000	
Valle Verde Ind.	[illegible]	
Wack Wack Golf	-	6,300,000

[illegible]
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Baguio Country Club	660K	please call
Camp John Hay	210K	
Canlubang Golf Club	400K	
Celebrity Sports Club	170K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	280K	
Filipinas Golf & Country Club	300K	
Makati Sports Club "A"	180K	please call
Manila Golf Club (Ind)	please call	10.2M
Manila Golf Club (Corp.)		11M
Manila Polo Club	please call	2.3M
Manila Southwoods "A"	please call	please call
Manila Southwoods "B"	550K	
Manila Yacht Club		250K
Orchard Golf Club "A"	150K	
Orchard Golf Club "B"	please call	please call
Puerto Azul Beach Club		70K
Quezon City Sports Club	150K	
Riviera Golf Club "B"		120K
Rockwell Club	320K	300K
Royale Tagaytay	please call	
Sherwood Hills Golf Club "B"	100K	
Subic Yacht Club	100K	
Tagaytay Highlands		700K
Tagaytay Midlands	680K	
The Country Club	please call	
Vally Golf CLub	250K	please call
Wack Wack Golf Club	7.2M	6.5M

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Meralco plans to consult PCCI on refund scheme

By Abigail L. Ho

MANILA Electric Co. is keen on meeting with members of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry to get additional inputs on the company's proposal for the fourth phase of its P30-billion refund of overcharges.

Meralco president Jesus Francisco said in a telephone interview Friday that it would be good for the company to meet with the PCCI before filing its proposal with the Energy Regulatory Commission within the week, as additional inputs could help in improving the company's proposal.

In an earlier interview, Meralco refund task force chief Leonardo Mabale said the company would file within the week the proposal for the fourth and last phase of its refund of overcharges, covering commercial and industrial customers.

Under the proposal, he said Meralco's big customers could either have their refund credited to future bills or, if they exceeded a certain volume usage cut-off, in the form of financial instruments.

He said the firm wanted to submit its phase 4 refund proposal to the ERC at the soonest possible time as it would need some lead time to have its financial instruments in the form of "refund notes" processed.

"It's to our benefit to have an early decision from the ERC so we can already work on processing the financial instruments," he said. "As soon as we get the approval, we'll inform our phase 4 customers so we can verify the refund amount with them and ask them how they want their refund to be done."

The fourth phase of the refund is the most costly for the Lopez-led firm as this will require the company to shell out around P18.6 billion to give back to its commercial and industrial customers the income tax charges passed on to them since 1994.

Mabale said Meralco had so far shelled out around P6 billion for the first two phases of the refund and for the first month of the third phase, which started January.

Gov't seen . . .

From page B1

"The figure is in line with our view that the deficit in 2004 will overshoot the target by around 20 percent, given the national elections in May, which is likely to mean increased expenditures (which may initially appear off-balance sheet as accounts payable) and reduced tax compliance," UBS stressed.

In relation to gross domestic product, UBS said it believed the government's fiscal deficit this year would reach 5 percent from 4.7 percent of GDP in 2003.

In January, expenditures rose by 7 percent while revenues expanded by 4.7 percent. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Lackluster trading seen

From page B1

Fausto said market players would continue to watch independent surveys on who's edging out who in the presidential race.

"I think the market would still trade sideways with no surprises in the corporate earnings and economic fronts," Fausto said.

Exports grew 4.1 percent in January, disappointing some analysts who expected growth of at least 10 percent. Inflation or the rise in prices of goods and services hit 3.4 percent for February, little changed from the previous month's.

"The latest reports provided little evidence that the economy is strengthening," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities Inc.

Vistan said stocks would continue to drift sideways as investors await further signs of a pickup in the economy and political stability.

"Even with a lower cost of trading due to the suspension of the documentary stamp tax, enthusiasm is likely to be limited due to the lack of a real impetus to trade. After the FPJ issue, investors will be faced with a vacuum in terms of market-moving factors. Generally good economic news and strong fourth-quarter earnings have raised optimism about the current economic recovery, but worries on domestic politics and US interest rates will persist," Vistan said.

Fausto said he expected first-quarter corporate earnings to be flat with prices of goods moderately up and this might pull back consumer demand and affect corporate profits.

Among the week's movers included Pilipino Telephone Corp., which rose to P1.70 from P1.56 last week, and Manila Electric Co., which rose to P19.75 from P19.50. Meralco said it was allowed by its short-term lenders to roll over short-term loans amounting to $79.2 million or P4.4 billion until June 2004. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Cocktales

From page BJ

the issues peacefully and for the best interest of all of us."

With the untimely death of her husband, textile magnate Ramon Siy Lay, Mrs. Siy has had to increasingly rely on Bernadine, the eldest child and, who, incidentally, still lives with her, to oversee the family's varied business empire. This decision, however, did not sit well with George, the second child, and two other siblings.

"By going to the courts to question the validity of the authority I have entrusted to your sister, you are jeopardizing the entire family's welfare," Mrs. Siy said.

The rest of the letter continues:

"The use of assets bequeathed to us by your father to hurt the family's own business interests and your own siblings is the height of irresponsibility and presumptuousness. The sooner [illegible] sooner we can sit down to resolve our differences, and allow Nadine to preside over the resolution to our family business.

"Everyday, I pray for a peaceful resolution to our dispute. I also pray that you will realize that such a resolution will never be possible for as long as our family's affairs are maliciously exploited to provide entertainment for the public."

According to the grapevine, Mrs. Siy, a former stockbroker, still drives her car notwithstanding her age and goes to Mass every day.

Short takes

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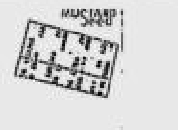
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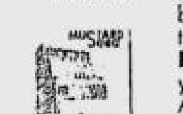
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SSS: Single biggest money loss ever—Part 3

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

SENATOR Sergio Osmeña III is quite a guy. As chair of the committee on banks, financial institutions and currency, he called three public hearings to investigate, in aid of legislation, the proposed sale by the Social Security System (SSS) of its 29-percent stake in Equitable PCI Bank to Banco de Oro.

A contingent of the Philippines Association of Retired Persons was at the hearings on the senator's kind invitation. PARP enjoyed watching the performance of a topnotch senator of the realm.

The hearings brought out all the sordid details of the proposed sweetheart deal. BDO initially offered to buy the shares at P43.50 apiece or a total of P8 billion in cold cash. Apparently because the offer was P10 higher than the market price then, the SSS accepted it without bothering to compute the share's value based on the bank's tangible and intangible assets. Ed Olaguer, PARP's financial analyst, explained lengthily why the share was worth as high as P60 apiece.

Also, the SSS did not want cash in full. Why? Because then, the books would have to show an investment loss of P6 billion since the shares originally cost P14 billion. Management did not really mind incurring the loss; they just did not want it shown in the books.

Why? Because an investment loss of P6 billion meant that, in accordance with the SSS law, the ceiling for operating expenses would have to be brought down by 3 percent of P6 billion, or P180 million.

The SSS management said the system could not be run with P180 million less for operating expenses. This is incredible. The amount is only 4 percent of total operating expenses. Besides, in the 2002 report of the Commission on Audit, here are some of the expenses that are either totally unnecessary or scandalously fat: Bonus, P271,282,363; provident fund, P245,465,251; incentive award, P162,641,030; Christmas expenses, P60,087,500; economic relief, P45,692,690; rice grant, P44,116,365; clothing allowance, P30,942,839; representation allowance, P64,205,521; (local) travelling expenses, P58,086,370; maintenance/repairs, furniture/equipment, P242,150.678; buildings/leased offices, P212,635,378, and transport equipment, P12,838,664.

Instead of cash in full, it was agreed that P1 billion would be paid up front. The balance of P7 billion would be covered by a P13-billion promissory note due in six and a half years. Thus, the accountants say, the books will show no loss. The fallacy is that P7 billion today and P13 billion six and a half years from now are equivalent, or equal in value. Besides, the note would earn only 9.5 percent interest compounded annually; a six and a half-year government bond would yield 11 percent. This meant that BDO would net 1.5 percent. Not bad for BDO.

Now, I hear the P13 billion will be called "inventory for sale." In accounting, this is called reclassifying the account. In engineering, this is called doctoring the data (no offense meant to the medical profession).

The in-house process of consulting the legal, investment and actuarial divisions was bypassed because BDO had requested that the deal be kept under wraps for ten days. Senator Osmeña pointed out that the confidentiality clause favored BDO only. It was after the agreement was signed that the three divisions were consulted. Legal, for example, explained that the collateral for the promissory note was not only inadequate, but, in fact, was useless.

PARP wants the SSS to negotiate for a higher price. Then, book whatever the loss there may be. Finally, cut operating expenses accordingly, even for only one year. Any loss should be borne, not only by the members, but also by management and the employees as well. *(To be concluded next week.)*

SEC chief's term ends on March 11

THE HELM of the country's corporate watchdog will be technically vacant by the end of this week as the four-year term of Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) Chair Lilia R. Bautista expires on March 11.

It is not certain if Malacañang will appoint a new chair or extend the incumbent's term considering Constitutional limitations.

Under the Constitution, the President cannot make any appointments to government posts two months before a Presidential election, unless there is prejudice to the service rendered.

Sources said Bautista's term might be extended until after the elections or until a successor was named.

The former Trade Undersecretary was sworn into office in March 2000 by former President Joseph Estrada to serve the unexpired term of then SEC Chair Perfecto Yasay Jr. Yasay stepped down reportedly due to pressure from the Palace.

Mindanao-World

From page B2

sectors and industries in Mindanao must be relentless in facilitating and promoting investments, especially in value-added production and manufacturing.

The above are the critical key areas we have to address in view of our entry into the global market. We cannot underscore the fact that many things could come along to make this feeling of optimism look misplaced.

The kind of leaders, both national and local, should be a concern to all. The peso may stabilize or continue to fall, depending on the volatility of events.

Those are fair worries and others could be added to the list. The Mindanao economy remains to be fragile. There is still much work to be done. But we Mindanawans also know that there are many reasons why we remain optimistic , and that we will survive the waves of change and be able to "swim with the sharks." *(Joji Ilagan Bian is the former chair of the Mindanao Business Council)*

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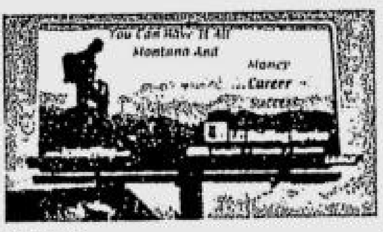
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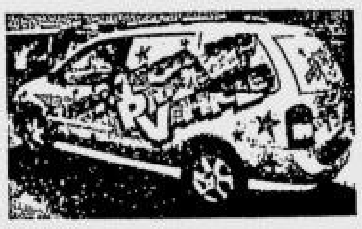
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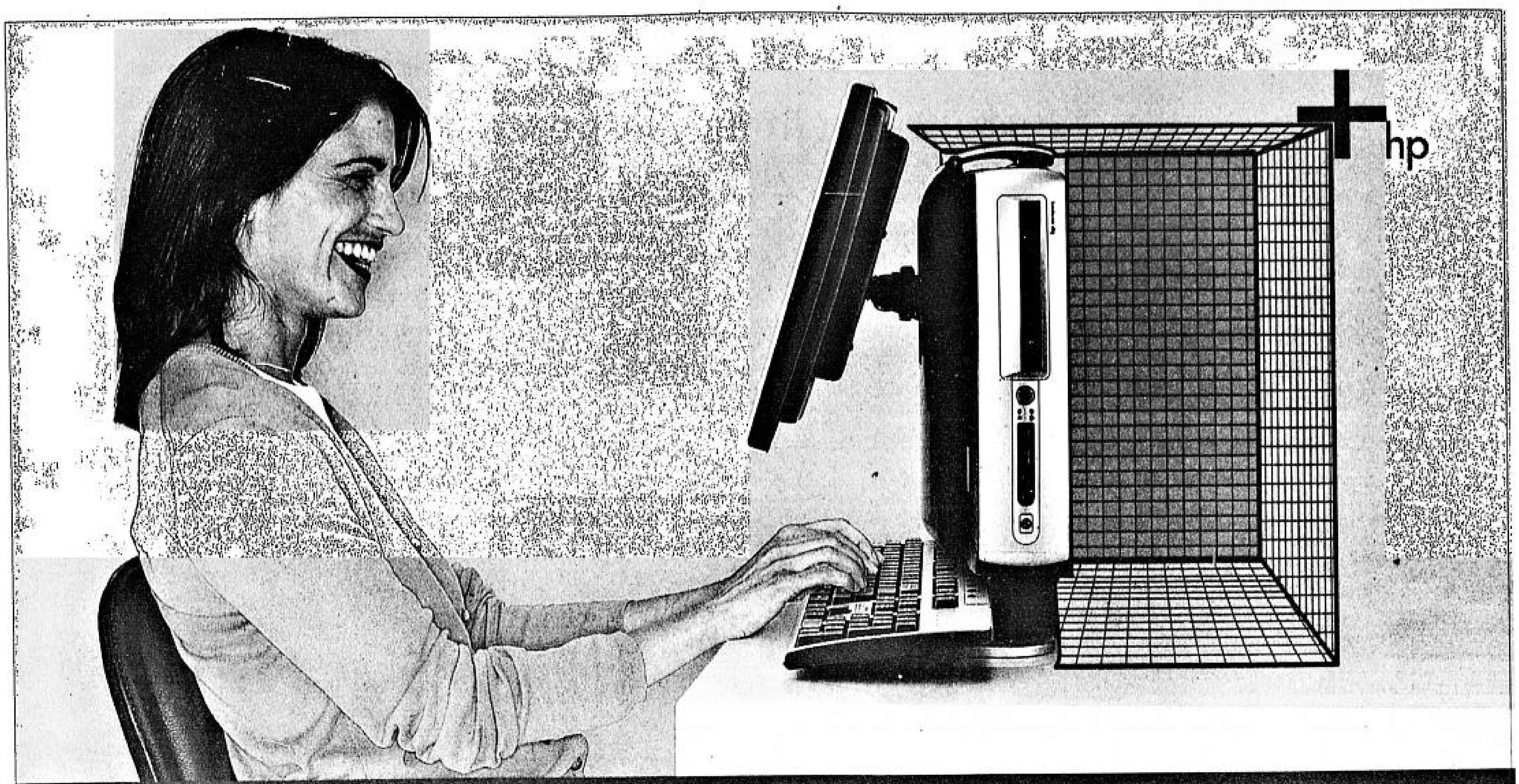

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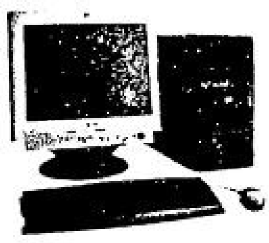

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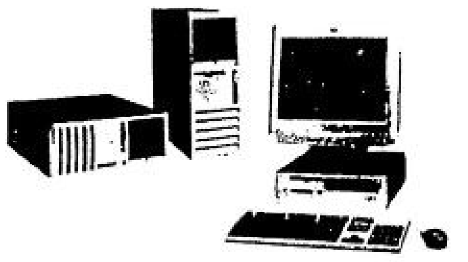

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*Source: IDC Asia/Pacific Quarterly PC Tracker, 3Q 2003

300% PROFIT GROWTH

Standard Chartered bullish on RP market

By Doris C. Dumlao

STANDARD Chartered Bank, the country's oldest foreign bank, is bullish on the Philippine market and expects to triple its net profit over the next three years.

In a press briefing last Friday, SCB Philippines chief executive officer Simon Morris said the bank posted a net profit of $15.6 million from its local operations last year, a significant increase from just $1.8 million reaped in 2002.

He said the growth was fueled by the rise in both the wholesale and consumer businesses.

For this year alone, Morris said SCB would likely see another 25 percent annual growth in net profit.

"If the market conditions allow, by 2006, at the earliest, or by 2007, at the latest, we hope that Philippine operations will be a bigger contributor to the whole SCB family," he said.

"All the signs are there," Morris added.

"We are upbeat about the country's prospects and capability. The Philippines represents a tremendous growth opportunity," he said.

Morris also said the bank had dropped earlier plans to expand its consumer business through the acquisition of another bank.

"We decided it was not right for us. The best way for us to grow is to grow organically. We have no plans to acquire although I'm sure there are other banks which would like to marry into the Standard Chartered family," he said.

But the banker said there would likely be more opportunities in retail banking in the Philippines.

He said this segment should eventually contribute about 60 percent of the bank's earnings.

He said the 300 percent growth projected for the next three years was based on the assumption that SCB would increase its share in the credit card and deposit-taking businesses.

"It will be a measured growth. The Philippines is a big market. There is a lot of room for growth in this country," he said.

Epixtar completes ₱46-M buyout of I-Call Global center in Alabang

By Ronnel W. Domingo

EPIXTAR Corp. of the United States has completed its P46-million acquisition of I-Call Global Services Corp.'s call center in Alabang.

This would enable the Miami-based company to have 2,000 seats for call center agents by August this year.

Epixtar, which assumed the day-to-day management of I-Call's local unit as early as September last year, said it paid for the company in cash and stock.

The firm currently has 250 contact center seats in operation in Alabang and is about to complete the first phase of its regional headquarters in Eastwood City.

Epixtar House, the company's 12-story Eastwood City flagship office, would have 1,750 seats when completed.

Sneharthi Roy, Epixtar's senior vice president, said in a statement: "We are on schedule to bring up around 350 seats a month over the next five months beginning in April."

Roy explained that the timing coincided with rising demand for Epixtar's services.

He added that Epixtar was considering several other sites in the country and hoped to rapidly expand capacity over the next few months.

Epixtar officials added that the company has decided to delay its entry into the Indian market and emphasized the advantages of the Philippines as an outsourcing destination.

Epixtar earlier planned to put up an outsourcing facility in Calcutta with 3,500 seats.

Epixtar Corp. is the parent company of Epixtar International Contact Center Group Ltd. (EICCG), Epixtar Communications Corp. (ECC) and the NOL Group Inc. (NOL).

ECC is a wholesale telecommunications provider while NOL provides Internet services to small and medium sized businesses.

Last month, Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said in a speech before the Management Association of the Philippines that the government was pushing for the development of business process outsourcing as a potential high-earning industry for the country.

Purisima added that he urged investors to develop call centers outside Metro Manila.

BIR, LTO, LTFRB to plug tax loopholes

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue has partnered with the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board and the Land Transportation Office to plug tax loopholes in the transport sector.

The BIR forged a partnership with the two agencies after detecting huge revenue losses from unpaid documentary stamp tax (DST) on insurance policies that cover public and private vehicles.

According to BIR Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares, data from the LTO show that 4.5 million vehicles were registered last year but the total DST on vehicle insurance collected by the BIR only accounted for about 850,000 registrants.

"There is really a huge discrepancy between the actual collection and what should have been collected. The coordination with them (LTFRB and LTO) will help us detect leakages and go after tax delinquents," said Henares.

The BIR official added that the combined gross income of non-life insurance companies from the sale of insurance policies to public utility vehicles amounted to P600 million last year.

Of the amount, insurance companies only spent about P15 million to cover for vehicular accidents, resulting in an estimated income of P585 million.

With the 32-percent tax on corporate income, the BIR should have collected P187.2 million worth of DST from vehicle insurance. Henares said, however, that the BIR collected less than half of the amount.

Henares reported that of the 99 non-life insurance companies who signed up for a bidding for PUV insurance last month, only two were cleared by the BIR as 100-percent tax compliant.

The participating companies were required by the LTFRB to get a clearance from the BIR before they could participate in the bidding.

But the failure of all the consortia of insurance companies to get a clearance from the BIR prompted the LTFRB to declare a failed bidding.

The government normally accredits two consortia of insurance companies to provide insurance policies for PUVs, but the failure of the bidding made the LTFRB decide to declare an "open season."

This means that PUVs may get vehicle insurance from any insurance company.

Aside from helping the BIR detect unpaid DST, Henares said the LTFRB also agreed to tighten its monitoring to reduce the number of PUVs operating without a franchise.

RP may not import corn

By Christine A. Gaylican

THERE may be no need after all for the government to import 350,000 metric tons (MT) of corn at zero percent tariff.

Artemio M. Salazar, program director of the GMA Corn Program, said in an interview Friday that initial data showed that the domestic corn production may be enough to cover the demand of local feed millers and hog farmers.

Salazar added that corn users should reconsider plans to import corn as local prices estimated at P11 per kilo was the same as the imports even at zero percent tariff.

Salazar, who expects a bumper harvest this quarter, said the improved prices of corn toward the end of last year encouraged farmers to increase their corn production.

The National Federation of Hog Farmers Inc. and the Philippine Association of Feedmillers (Pafmi) earlier requested the duty-free importation of corn to address the meat shortage and the increasing prices of feeds.

Local corn farmers objected to the proposal of the hog raisers and feed millers to import corn, saying this would bring down prices of local corn.

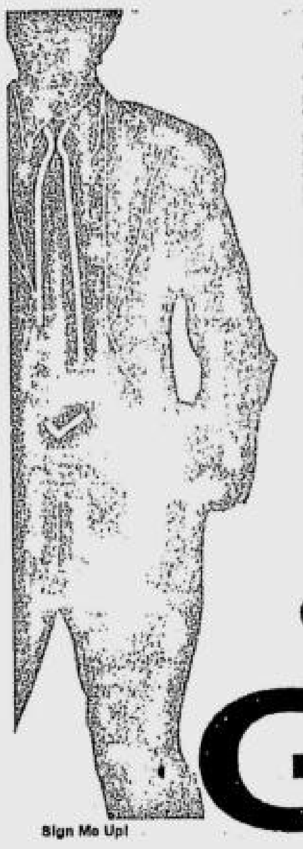
Rod Bioco, president of the Philippine Maize Federation Inc. (Philmaize), whose members are corn farmers, accused the corn users of maneuvering to bring down local corn prices.

"The intent to dampen the corn market through government intervention is very clear. Even if the landed cost is P11 per kilo, the importation itself while there is still enough supply after the harvest season will have a preemptive effect on the local market," Bioco said.

Bioco said the corn users shifted to local corn when the prices of imported corn and corn substitutes went up in the world market in recent months.

But the rush to grab local corn at P9 to P9.50 per kilogram led to an increase in corn prices to P12 per kilogram in November.

"The devaluation of the Philippine currency also contributed to the significant increase in imported commodities. Corn farmers should not be penalized for these uncontrollable factors," Bioco said.



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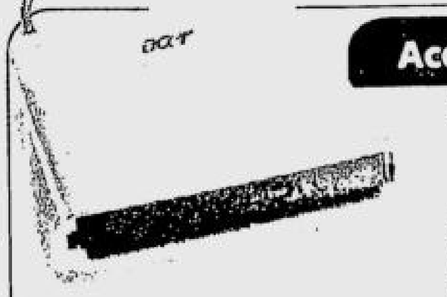

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Marymount upgrades sports development

EFFECTIVE learning is bred from fun and creative exercises. Strong academic foundation, integrated with values formation, is something most parents want for their children. But bracing both together can be too square and dull for today's active and advanced generation.

"A child learns through movement; physical workout teaches discipline, which is the groundwork of a balanced life," states Sylvia Limon, founder and school director of Marymount School. "This was my principle when I established the Child Learning Center-Makati, and Marymount School being the spin-off, carries the same. We believe that enhancing our extra-curricular and sports activities eventually bring dramatic results in a student's readiness for life," she adds.

To meet the vision, Marymount has further enhanced its sports development program in its curricula through basic and advanced taekwondo and Bobby Parks' Hoops School basketball program. Remy Marte, school registrar, happily announces, "We have introduced these two sports into our regular classes-where students get trained by professional instructors and coaches, with the experience not limited to the summer clinics, but year round."

In the heart of BF Paranaque is Marymount-a school that believes in the individuality and total being of a child-an institution that looks after the welfare and progress of every student through meaningful activities and the personalized interaction of faculty with students and parents.

From successful preschool operations beginning with Child Learning Center (CLC) in Makati, Limon opened Marymount, building up its name with the secure yet homely environment that it provides to students. To strengthen the academic portfolio, the school followed a fast-tracking system that introduced advanced learning modules in the regular curricula, ensuring that students from pre-school to high school are ahead in their levels. Information technology is also integrated in all the subjects, plus, the facilities are competitive with the bigger schools. As an institution, it values the right of every child to get good education. Thus, Marymount welcomes every opportunity that is not discriminatory in any way.

Marymount academe boasts of a "personalized" classroom and school environment with performance academics and value-formation. "It helps them cope with the eventual change," says teacher Mariecar Ramos, guidance coordinator. Of course, it has to be a partnership between the parents and teachers to make the system more effective.

The pre-school department, which is called CLC, together with the preschoolers in the original CLC in Makati, also observes the importance of brotherhood and family relations through a sociocultural program called "Pepito" the paper doll. Each child gets a Pepito doll to color, and sends him to their friends and relatives abroad through postal mail, who are in turn requested to send him back with stories and photos portraying his experiences in their own hometown. The response was tremendous. Pepito came back to Manila with countless adventures in Europe, Australia, United States and Asia, and fostered unimaginable friendship.

Parents agree that sending their children to Marymount is value for money and time. Children become competent, skills and talents are developed, discipline is learned while they are provided Christian formation and community and outreach involvement. "These things collectively make the children well-rounded and prepared for life," says parent Stella Fulgencio, "while they are closely monitored so parents and teachers can work together in helping them succeed."

In those days when school was perceived to be traditional and strict, Marymount addresses them with innovation and growing features where the wall between the love and pampering in the home and the discipline and values in the school stands on a thin line, gearing the child's future and total well-being towards a framework that easily embraces both worlds.

For inquiries, call Marymount School at 809-5017, 809-4488 local 107 or CLC-Makati at 895-2389 or 890-2474.

BAJA RECEIVES UN AWARD

Ambassador Lauro L. Baja Jr, the Philippines' permanent representative to the United Nations, is the recipient of the distinguished UN-Gen. Carlos P. Romulo award conferred by the United Nations 'in recognition of his vast knowledge, outstanding performance and ability as the Philippines permanent representative to the United Nations'. He is the first Filipino to be elected chair of the legal and sanctions committees of the powerful United Nations Security Council voted upon by representatives of 191 countries. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (3rd from left) presents the award to Ambassador Baja (here represented by his wife Norma Castro Baja, 4th from left) in ceremonies in Malacanang. Witnessing the ceremonies are (from left) Judge Aurora N. Recina, vice president, United Nations Association of the Philippines and chair of the Commission on Human Rights, former Rep. Minerva Laudico, Unap president, Lauro Baja III, who delivered the response on behalf of his father, and Debra Lindrey, UN Representative to the Philippines.

Pharmacoeconomics: Giving more value to patients' money

DESPITE the advancement in the field of medicine, chronic diseases remain to be the leading cause of death worldwide. An estimated 151 million people are currently living with diabetes. In United States, a person dies from cardiovascular diseases every 33 seconds. The numbers are no less glaring for the other chronic diseases such as tuberculosis, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), and asthma.

The number of deaths resulting form chronic diseases can be lessened. Though these diseases cannot be cured, it can be managed through a healthy lifestyle and religious treatment regimen. The only problem lies in the fact that the drugs needed to manage chronic diseases are usually expensive.

According to World Health Organization sources, at the beginning of the 21st century an estimated one third of the world population still lacks regular access to essential drugs, with this figure rising to over 50 percent in the poorest parts of Africa and Asia. The fact that essential drugs remain to this day unavailable, unaffordable, unsafe, or improperly used in many parts of the world is a matter of great concern.

As many people in developing countries do not have access to life-saving quality medicines, serious moves should be done in order to ensure that people suffering from chronic disease or any disease for that matter could afford the medicine that would help them manage their illness. New and effective medicines, which have been developed for the management of chronic diseases, would be useless if these wouldn't be utilized by the people who need them.

In the Philippines, the principle of pharmacoeconomics has already been initiated in order to help chronic disease patients comply with their treatment. Pharmacoeconomics ensures administration of medicines, other healthcare products and services with the highest possible benefits to the patient in relation to the cash invested. It aims to improve patient compliance by providing effective and affordable medicines that have to be taken religiously for several years, sometimes for life, which is the case with people who suffers from chronic diseases.

Although cost containment is one of its primary goals, pharmacoeconomics' benefits are not confined to the money being saved by a patient through a less expensive drug. The greatest benefit of pharmacoeconomics lies in the fact that these drugs are effective and bioequivalent with the originator drugs manufactured by multinational companies.

A good understanding of pharmacoeconomics may serve to guide disease management, inform clinical decisions and aid practical prescription of medicines. An affordable and effective drug, coupled with improved compliance, will result in better disease management and fewer repeat consultations and prescriptions. More importantly, it would pave the way for a patient's productivity and better quality of life.

With the prevalence of chronic disease increasing to epidemic proportion, choosing drugs that are therapeutic equivalents is of increasing importance. The various divisions of Unilab, a leading pharmaceutical company in the country, are committed to helping improve healthcare delivery to every Filipino family by providing high-quality and affordable medicines for common medical problems.

Nestle's Koko Krunch school tour goes to Poveda

SOME children tend to skip breakfast in their haste to get to school on time, and they head to school with empty stomachs, with very little energy to fuel their brains for the grueling school activities ahead. This habit has led to decreased comprehension in the classroom, very short attention spans, and irritability.

In its determined crusade to promote to school children the beneficial habit of eating a healthy breakfast, the Nestle Koko Krunch Smart Start School Performance Campaign kicked off once again as the Breakfast Tour Team encouraged early morning Krunch-ing in approximately 70 schools all over Metro Manila. The campaign, now on its third year, is based on a landmark study by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Achievement at the University of Minnesota.

The research showed that after two years of providing cereals with milk to six Minnesota elementary schools, an increase of up to 10 percent in reading scores and up to 16 percent in math scores were evident in the children's grades. The study also reported that discipline problems dropped by 40 to 50 percent while visits to the doctor's office declined by 30 to 60 percent over a period of time. This led to the conclusion that children who smart-start with a healthy breakfast such as cereals perform better in school and pose less discipline and health problems.

With this knowledge, Nestle set out to promote the healthy habit of starting a child's day with a vitamin-rich breakfast through its "Smart Start for Smart Kids" campaign, which is all about imparting to children the three basic qualities an ideal breakfast should have: nutritious, delicious, and convenient.

At the start of their day, children need all the growth nutrients, especially since their last meal may still have been that of the night before. Any of the Nestle Breakfast Cereals, when served with milk, provides approximately 25 percent of the recommended daily allowance for important nutrients like carbohydrates, protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals.

To convince children not to miss it, their breakfast should not only taste good but should also be fun to eat. Children love these crunchy and delicious cereals, mixed with milk or their favorite fruit, certainly a fun way to take a nutritious meal.

As children are always in a rush to get to school, it is important to have breakfast that's easy to prepare. All one needs is to pour any of these Nestle Breakfast Cereals into a bowl and add milk, and the children are all set for a healthy "smart start" for their day.

To spread the smart start habit, the Nestle Koko Krunch Breakfast Team toured the schools. Just recently, it made waves at the Poveda Learning Institute in Mandaluyong. Students from Grades 3 to 6 were thrilled to participate as all the elements of fun that appeal to children were present in the event-an endearing mascot, an exciting quiz show, interactive discussion on the importance of breakfast, and free servings of their favorite Koko Krunch cereal. The students brought home delicious Koko Krunch packs as well as bits of academic wisdom gained from the informative quiz show. Winners brought home medals, cash prizes and additional Koko Krunch gift packs.

The ongoing school tour highlights the importance of children having their smart start for the day, especially since Nestle has made available in the market all flavors of cereals. Children will definitely delight in these various lip-smacking crunchy variants that include Koko Krunch, Milo Balls, Honey Stars, Trix, and Snow Flakes. Adults may also treat themselves to nutritious and delicious Corn Flakes, Honey Gold, Almond Clusters, Banana Nut Clusters, and Fitness all available in leading supermarkets and groceries nationwide.

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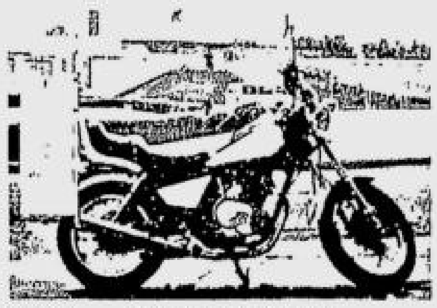

EFFECTIVENESS and affordability are the two primary factors a candidate looks for when campaigning for an elective post this coming May 2004 elections. The Roadcasters Network Group provides the only answer as the most effective yet affordable medium.

The Roadcasters' motorcycle is equipped with two long throw speakers, a 100-watt amplifier, and a CD player used to broadcast the message of the candidate, and can be recorded in its in-house audio/visual room. With its fleet of Harley Davidson-like 150 cc powered motorcycles, they can even squeeze through the tightest eskinitas to directly deliver the candidates voice and message to its future constituents. The rates are even affordable with only P100 per 60-second spot. Banners can also be installed on the sides of the motorbikes at only P50 pesos per day exposure.

The Roadcasters network group also accepts regular advertisers with lockout positions for the same competitive product/s. Just like lockouts for candidates vying for the same position. The Roadcasters Network Group can also be hired for promotional purposes anywhere in the Philippines for a short period of time.

The Roadcasters will be roaming the streets in brightly colored uniforms with advertising patches on their uniforms designed for clients to put their logos on, just like in motor racing uniforms. For bookings, call Nat at 671-7275, or 671-5955.

Bits & Clips

Mabini Colleges homecoming

MABINI Colleges of Daet, Camarines Norte will celebrate its 80th Founding Anniversary on April 10 and 11 (Saturday and Sunday). All Mabini Colleges graduates of elementary, high school, college and post-graduate studies are invited. Watch out for the kumustahan, free raffle bonanza, batch presentation and other exciting activities. For pre-registration and other details, see or call Myrna Godeloson at (054)440-3300 or 0920-3016487.

ECCP exec training

THE EUROPEAN Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP), together with the American Management Association (AMA), invites business executives and decision-makers and even government leaders to join its executive development seminars this March. "The Voice of Leadership: How Leaders Inspire, Influence and Achieve Results" (March 9 to 11) will discuss practical techniques that would help executives and senior company officers become more effective communicators, craft compelling leadership messages that inspire action and produce results, and hone an authentic leadership voice. Interested parties can call 759-6680, 845-1324.

'Pagbabalik Loob'

THE LAY Formation Center invites the public to a Lenten Recollection with Bishop Chito Tagle on March 11, Thursday from 1 to 5:30 p.m. at Lay-Force, San Carlos Seminary, Edsa, Guadalupe. The recollection is free for everyone. The theme is "Pagbabalik Tanaw-Pagbabalik Loob."

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Notice is given that the estate of MARTHA CUCIO was extrajudicially settled among her heirs before Notary Public Reynaldo Hernandez, Cab. City per Doc. #447, Page #90, Book #2, Series of 2004.
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website: www.afp.mil.ph
e-mail: cosb.j9@afp.mil.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Armed Forces of the Philippines invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid in the 1-Stage bid process for the Upgrade of Two (2) Patrol Killer Medium (PKM)/Wildcat Class Gunboats of the Philippine Navy, which shall be done in the Republic of Korea (ROK) or in the Philippines. It has an approved budget of Two Hundred Eighty-eight Million Pesos (Php 288,000,000.00), chargeable against the AFP Modernization Program CY 2002 funds.

Only bids from ROK and/or Filipino-owned shipbuilding/ship repair companies shall be entertained.

The 1st stage bid documents shall only be available for issuance starting March 1 until March 28, 2004 during office hours at the BAC Secretariat, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Capability, Materiel and Technology Development, J9, GHQ, AFP, 3rd Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo (CGEA), Quezon City. The bid documents shall be issued upon payment of a registration fee amounting to Twenty-eight Thousand and Eight Hundred Pesos (Php 28,800.00), which is not refundable. The form of payment shall be in cash or cashier's check in favor of the AFP Modernization Act Trust Fund.

A Special Power of Attorney, issued by the prospective bidder, authorizing its representative to purchase the 1st stage bid documents in its behalf, shall be required before issuance of said documents.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on **March 15, 2004 at 09:00 a.m.** (local time) at the **Silid Panday Pira, 1st Floor, Bulwagang Mabini, Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City**. Bidders may submit their query/ies, if any, in writing to the BAC Secretariat not later than seven (7) working days prior to the Pre-Bid Conference.

The Bidder shall be allowed to inspect the two (2) PKM gunboats at the ROK Navy Shipyard Chin Hae Naval Base in Busan, ROK upon purchase of bid documents until the deadline of submission of the bids, and upon prior request from the Camp Commander of Chin Hae Naval Base. All bidders who cannot afford to send an Inspection Team to ROK may get all available data also at J9, GHQ, CGEA.

Deadline for submission of bids is on **March 29, 2004 at 9:00 a.m.** (local time) and followed by the Opening of Bids at 9:30 AM at the Silid Panday Pira.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids based on the grounds for disqualification specified in RA 9184 without assuming any obligation whatsoever for expenses or losses that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. JOSE N. FERRER, JR.**
Chairman, DND-BAC

(PDI - March 1 & 8, 2004)

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that the Amended Articles of Incorporation of **The Prudent Choice Insurance Agency Corporation (the "Corporation")**, which shortened the term of its corporate existence to end on **August 30, 2003** and thereby dissolving the said corporation on said date, has been approved by its Board of Directors and shareholders at duly constituted meetings both held on **July 30, 2003**.

All persons having claims against said corporation are requested to present same at the Corporation's principal place of business located at AIC Center, Escolta, Manila.

This announcement will serve as notice to all concerned of the legal dissolution of the aforesaid corporation.

(Sgd.) **ETHELWOLDO E. FERNANDEZ**
Corporate Secretary

(PDI - Feb 23 March 1 & 8 2004)

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TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
AD NO. MMD-TRANSCO 2003-135

PD Ref. No.: PB-040202-AA0022
PR No.: SCD-03-005067

1. The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (TRANSCO - BAC) - HEAD OFFICE**, invites local bidders/contractors to apply for eligibility who are:
   a. Duly license Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or
   b. Partnership duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the interest belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   c. Corporations duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and of which at least sixty percent (60%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines; or
   d. Manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors forming themselves into a joint venture, i.e., group of two (2) or more manufacturers, suppliers and/or distributors that intend to be jointly and severally responsible or liable for a particular contract provided, however, That Filipino ownership or interest of the joint venture concerned shall be at least sixty percent (60%); or
   e. Cooperatives duly registered with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA).
2. Procurement of:
   Supply of Labor, Materials & Tools for General Overhauling of:
   Schedule I Compressor No. 1
   Schedule II Compressor No. 2
3. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall be specified in the Technical Quotation Form of the Bid Documents to be issued to prospective bidders.
   The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid is *P397,000.00* to be sourced from the Internal Cash Generation of TransCo.
4. The Bid Documents will be available for issuance starting February 27, 2004 to March 22, 2004 at The BAC Secretarial Office, National Transmission Corporation, Materials Management Division (MMD), Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Five Hundred Pesos (P500.00)** per set.
5. Pre-Bid Conference will be held on March 11, 2004 at 2:00 p.m. at the Admin Conference Room, G/F TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City.
6. Deadline for submission, receipt and opening of bids shall be on or before 10:00 a.m. of March 23, 2004 at the Admin Conference Room, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg., Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City. If the date falls on a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
7. All particulars relative to be eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations-A of Republic Act 9184.
8. TransCo reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
9. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **A.G. LABAYANI**
Chairman, Bids and Award Committee

(PDI - Feb. 28 & March 8, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF SOUTHERN LEYTE
Municipality of Sogod
- oOo -
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The Municipality of Sogod, Southern Leyte through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) hereby invites all interested qualified Contractors to bid the hereunder-listed ARCDP projects funding in the amount of P10,218,935.30 for 10 barangays package of the Municipality of Sogod.

Name of Project : CONCRETING OF TEN (10) BARANGAY ROADS PACKAGE - 1, Brgys. Maac, Libas, Salvacion, Pandan, Mahayahay, San Isidro, Magatas, Javier, Suba and Dagsa.

Pre-bidding conference will be on March 8, 2004, 10:00 A.M. at the Office of the Municipal Mayor, Sogod, Southern Leyte.

Dropping and Opening of bids will be on March 19, 2004 at 10:00 A.M. at the Office of the Municipal Mayor, Sogod, Southern Leyte.

The Municipality of Sogod reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive informality/deficiency therein or to accept such bids as may be considered most advantageous to the government.

For more details, please contact Engr. Antonino V. Cabardo or Engr. Ruel E. Allejar, at the Office of the Municipal Engineer/Mun. Planning and Development Coordinator with Tel. No. (053) 3822761.

(Sgd.) **ROSALINA T. GALDO**
Municipal Treasurer
BAC Chairman

(PDI – March 4 & 8, 2004)

MACTAN CEBU
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
LAPU-LAPU CITY PHILIPPINES

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Mactan-Cebu International Airport Authority through its Bids and Award Committee (BAC) with office at Mactan, Lapulapu City, invites all interested suppliers/manufacturers to register and to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Supply and Installation, including Test and Commissioning of Five (5) units X-Ray Machine for Mactan-Cebu International Airport.
2. Interested Bidders who may apply for eligibility should be
   a. Duly licensed Filipino Citizens/DTI Registered Business Name of SEC Registration Certificated whichever may be appropriate under the existing laws of the Philippines, with at least sixty (60%) percent of the outstanding capital stock belongs to citizens of the Philippines or Direct Manufacturers interested to bid
   b. The Manufacturer must have a track record of similar transactions for at least 5 years and an In-Country Distributor for after sales service support and qualified factory trained service technician/engineers
   c. The Manufacturer must guarantee the availability of bided equipment's components & parts for at least 5 years
3. To be registered, interested bidders must submit the following eligibility documents (in case of photocopied documents, the original must be presented or for Direct Manufacturers, the documents must be authenticated by the Philippine Consulate Office in the country of origin)
   a. DTI/SEC Registration Certificate, or similar documents of the Manufacturer's country of origin, whichever is appropriate
   b. Mayor's Permit, Municipal License.
   c. BIR Certificate of Registration
   d. Notarized affidavit certifying under oath that each documents submitted is an original copy or a true faithful transaction or copy of the original
   e. List of completed similar transactions for at least 5 years for both supplier/manufacturer. Submit Certification of Acceptance and Turnover and List of On-going and to be awarded transactions
   f. Audited Financial Statement for the last 2 calendar years stamped by BIR or its duly accredited & authorized institution
   g. Organizational Chart, List of key personnel with resumé
4. Submission of Letter of Intent with Eligibility documents will be on March 10 to 22, 2004. Distribution of Bid Documents will be on March 22 to 26, 2004 at the BAC Office from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P15,000.00
   Pre-Bid Conference April 2, 2004 at 9:00 a.m. at BAC Office
   Bid Opening April 16, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. at BAC Office
   (Closing at 9:45 a.m.)
5. For more information, please contact the BAC Secretariat at telephone number 341-4617 or at 3402486 local 1461 or 2050
6. The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids waive any defect of informality, assume no obligation whatsoever or indemnify to the bidders any expense of loss that it may incur in the preparation of its bid, and to accept the bid most advantageous to the Government

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ROGELIO C. YAUN**
BAC Chairman

(PDI - March 8 & 15, 2004)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
MANDALUYONG CITY
BRANCH 214

IN THE MATTER OF: THE CORPORATE REHABILITATION OF UNIVERSAL RIGHTFIELD PROPERTY HOLDINGS, INCORPORATED PURSUANT TO THE INTERIM RULES OF PROCEDURE ON CORPORATE REHABILITATION (A.M. NO. 00-8-10-SC)

SEC CASE NO. MC-03-080

D.M. CONSUNJI, INC.,
Petitioner,
x---x

ORDER

This is a creditor-initiated verified petition for rehabilitation filed by the above-named petitioner pursuant to Rule 4, Section 1 of the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation (Interim Rules).

Briefly, petitioner seeks the rehabilitation of Universal Property Holdings, Inc. (URPHI) through this creditor initiated petition and as a holder of more than twenty five percent (25%) of the outstanding liabilities of the latter incurred in the construction and engineering projects undertaken by petitioner for URPHI, namely: Pioneer Highlands Project (Pioneer Highlands II) and Dansalan Gardens II Project. Of the total liabilities of URPHI to all its creditors amounting to Php 1,396.85 Million, petitioner holds Thirty Six percent (36%) or Php 480.50 Million as of September 30, 2003. Billing statements and demands for payment have been made by petitioner to URPHI in the past and thereafter but the latter has failed to fully settle its obligations due to its cashflow shortfall.

Petitioner contends that the rehabilitation of URPHI will greatly and primarily benefit all the creditors of the latter as it will provide URPHI the opportunity to pay its liabilities to them over a period of time. The proposed rehabilitation plan of Universal Rightfield Property Holdings, Incorporated (URPHI) proposes that the latter's financial indebtedness of approximately Php 1,396.85 Million be reduced through modes of *dacion en pago* arrangement as it will accelerate payments of the debts and lessen the pressure for debt servicing, by developing real property currently in the land bank of URPHI into value-added property, including joint venture undertakings with third-party developers/financiers, and recapitalization. The rehabilitation plan also calls or an initial funding of Php150 Million to jumpstart development costs of the Cabuyao property development; that URPHI is projected to be able to repay the significantly reduced amount of Php 1,396.85 Million over a period of ten (10) years which repayment term is not unusual throughout Asia in restructurings of this size and where security is over the operational assets of the company; and that, if approved and implemented, the rehabilitation plan would have the following beneficial effects, viz: a) URPHI, its customers and suppliers will be able to carry on business in the ordinary course without the imminent threat of liquidation by creditors enforcing debts that are due and payable which obligations would be replaced by an orderly retirement of debt on a sustainable basis over 10 years. b) The right of bank creditors that prove that they have a valid security and enforceable interest will be unaffected by the rehabilitation plan, as their security interest will remain in effect and can be enforced should URPHI default on its restructured financial indebtedness and go into liquidation. c) The terms of repayment to all financial creditors will be *pari passu* in accordance with Asian Restructuring Practice. d) The URPHI Group will continue to provide its development construction services expertise, and fulfill its obligations to the public as a co-developer in affordable housing to the public, and e) Preservation of jobs in the company and downstream beneficiaries. Consequently, petitioner prays for the immediate issuance of a Stay Order pending proceedings before this court and the appointment of a rehabilitation receiver.

WHEREFORE, finding the Petition sufficient in form and substance, a Stay Order pursuant to Rule 4, Section 6 of the Interim Rules of Procedure on Corporate Rehabilitation is hereby issued, as follows:

(a) Staying enforcement of all claims, whether for money or otherwise and whether such enforcement is by Court action or otherwise against URPHI, its guarantors and sureties not solidarily liable with it including the staying of proceedings of collection cases filed against it, and the staying of the enforcement/implementation of application/s for extra-judicial foreclosure sale/s and actual foreclosure sale/s, if any, against the real and personal properties of URPHI;
(b) Prohibiting URPHI from selling, encumbering, transferring or disposing in any manner any of its properties, except in the ordinary course of business;
(c) Prohibiting URPHI from making any payment of its liabilities outstanding as at the date of filing of the Petition (January 30, 2004);
(d) Prohibiting the suppliers of goods or services of URPHI from withholding supply of goods and services in the course of business for as long as URPHI makes payments for the services and goods supplied after the issuance of this Stay Order; and,
(e) Directing the payment in full of all administrative-expenses incurred after the issuance of this Stay Order.

Attorney Monico V. Jacob, with address at CEO, Inc. c/o STI 7th Floor Philippine First Bldg., 6764 Ayala Avenue, Makati City is appointed rehabilitation receiver, who shall be considered an officer of the court and who shall have the powers, duties, and functions as provided in Section 14, Rule 4 of the aforecited Interim Rules. He can assume the position upon taking an oath and after posting a bond in the amount of Two Million Pesos (Php 2,000,000.00) executed in favor of URPHI, to guarantee that he will faithfully discharge his duties as trustee of the assets of the debtor and the Orders of this Court. The petitioner is directed to immediately serve a copy of this Stay Order upon the rehabilitation receiver, Atty Monico V. Jacob, who shall manifest his acceptance or non-acceptance of his appointment not later than ten (10) days from receipt hereof.

The initial hearing of the Petition is hereby set on March 29, 2004 at 8:30 o'clock in the morning at the Session Room of this court located at the Ground Floor of the Justice Hall, Mandaluyong City Hall Compound, Maysilo, Boni Avenue, Mandaluyong City. All creditors and all interested parties (including the Securities and Exchange Commission) are directed to file and serve on the petitioner their verified comment on or opposition to the Petition, with supporting affidavits and documents, not later than ten (10) days before the date of the initial hearing. Within such time as to enable all creditors and interested parties to file their comment on, or opposition to the Petition and to prepare them for the initial hearing of the petition, they are further directed to secure from this Court copies of the Petition and its annexes.

The petitioner is further more directed to publish this Stay Order at the Philippine Daily Inquirer, and one other newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines with widespread circulation in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao if it is a newspaper other than the herein named newspaper chosen by raffle, once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks, with the last publication effected at least three (3) weeks prior to the date of initial hearing as setforth above

SO ORDERED.

Mandaluyong City.
17 February 2004

(Sgd.) EDWIN D. SORONGON
Judge

(PDI--March 1 & 8, 2004)

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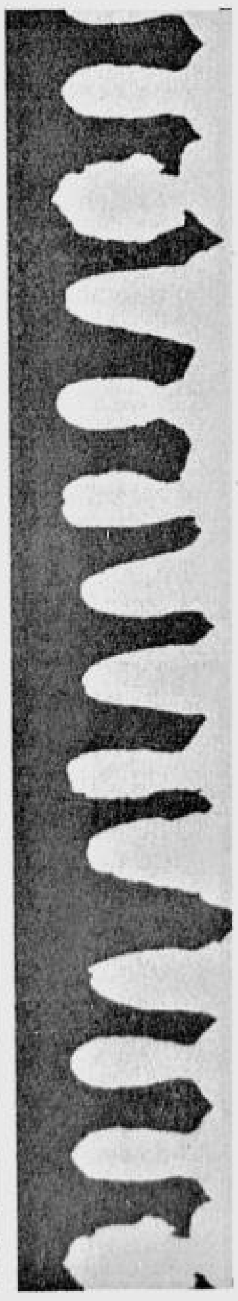

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ANACORITA B. RICABORDA

Peacefully died in the Grace of our Lord
on March 6, 2004 at the age of 63.

Her bereaved husband, **LINO**; children: **Ellen & Noel**, **Dannie & Jane**, **Lito & Maribe**, and **Kenneth & Rosie**; grandchildren: **Maris, Tin-tin, Joan Mae, Danielle Marie** and **Matthew**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Chapel H, St. Peter Memorial Chapel, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

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-Ginnie Gonzalez
The Pet Pantry Bulacan / Pampanga

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PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE (PMO)

INVITATION TO SUBMIT OFFERS

Offered for sale are the assets formerly belonging to **HERCULES MINERALS AND OIL, INC.** (**HMOI**) consisting of **buidings, machinery & equipment** located at Brgy. Elizabeth, Marcos, Ilocos Norte.

The assets are offered, as follows:

Particulars	Indicative Price
Buildings, machinery & equipment	P 2,083,749.00

Offers will be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of the offerors on **25 March 2004** at 3:00 p.m. at the Conference Room, 6th Floor, PMO 104 Gamboa Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties may request for a duly authenticated copies of the **Specific Rules on Offer for Sale (SROS0, Offer for Sale Form (OSF)** together with the **Asset Specific Catalogue** (**ASC**) for a nominal fee of P500.00 form the PMO Marketing Office, 104 Gamboa Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City.

PMO reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject any or all offers for the protection of public interest and the preservation of public property.

In the event this Offer for Sale fails, PMO reserves the right to consider proposals submitted for the above assets.

For more information, please call Ms. Jane V. Santiago at **818-4733/ 892-2145.**

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
1598 M. H. del Pilar St. cor. Dr. J. Quintos St., Malate, Manila
Tel. Nos. 522-00-00; 526-01-00 connecting all departments

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) invites all interested concessionaires who are a) Duly licensed Filipino citizens / sole proprietorships; or b) 60% Filipino owned Partnership/Corporations; or c) Two (2) or more concessionaires forming into 60% Filipino joint ventures; or d) Cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; all with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) of at least equal to P7.9M, to apply for eligibility and to bid as Concessionaire of LandBank Plaza Executive Lounge (EL) and Cafeteria. The other minimum requirements to be eligible to bid are the following: a) Experience in the restaurant business of not less than five (5) years. b) At least one (1) whole year of concessionaire operations serving the per meal requirement of at least 1,000 class B and higher category officers and employees in one company; c) Willing to sell its products at prices not higher than that set by the LBP.

A two (2) stage selection procedure shall be conducted. Stage 1 – submission of documentary requirements is scheduled on April 6, 2004 and Stage 2 – submission of bid security and bid proposal is scheduled on May 12, 2004.

The Bid Documents including the Rules and Procedures may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LandBank Plaza, M. H. Del Pilar Street corner Dr. Quintos Street, Malate, Manila, upon submission of Letter of Intent and payment of non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,000.00). Interested concessionaires are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on March 22, 2004, 9:00 AM.

All particulars relative to the Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

ANTONIO T. HERNANDEZ
SVP, Corporate Services & Subsidiaries Sector
Chairman, Committee on Bids and Awards

(PDI - March 8 & 15, 2004)

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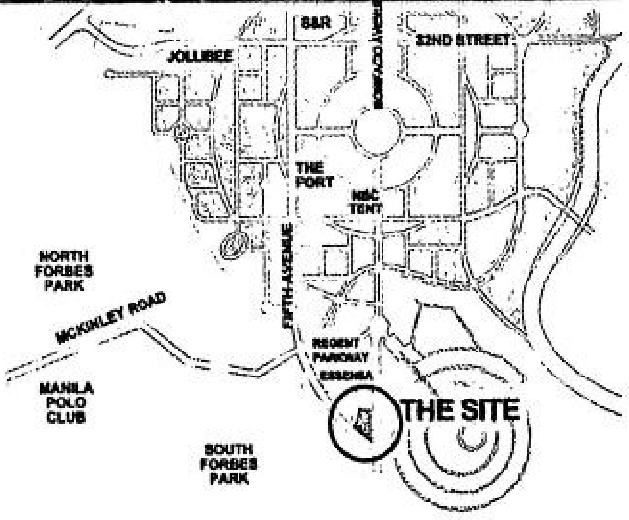
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Where presidentiables would like to be

By Doris C. Dumlao

DESPITE many roadblocks along Pasong Tamo, business leaders and VIPs trooped to the INQUIRER office Wednesday night to honor the country's Management Man for 2003, Planters Development Bank chair and CEO Jesus Tambunting.

Philippine Daily Inquirer president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez, who welcomed the guests, said the former Ambassador to the UK was an inspiration for everyone, being an epitome of management excellence.

Tambunting, who was the country's 25th Management Man honoree, was credited for building a financial institution totally devoted to the country's small and medium enterprises.

Management Association of the Philippines president and SGV & Co. chair David Balangue said the selection of an honoree each year was a tedious process. Among the criteria were integrity, leadership and management qualities, contribution to nation-building and value formation as well as effective leadership based on the highest standards of business ethics.

Balangue praised not only Tambunting's accomplishment in Plantersbank but his role in strengthening the Philippines' bilateral ties with the UK during his term as Ambassador.

Tambunting, who was accompanied by his family, said he would like to share the award to the men and women of Plantersbank for their hardwork, dedication and perseverance in building the bank.

"The award is an affirmation of my faith and confidence in Filipino entrepreneurship. It validates the correctness of my decision to devote the entire resources of our bank in nurturing and sustaining our small Filipino enterpreneurs," Tambunting said.

In 1972, Tambunting, who was then a senior executive of a big commercial bank, decided to strike out on his own and bought a small Bulacan-based development bank. His original plan then was to grow the bank, transfer it to Makati and transform it into a commercial bank catering to large corporate accounts.

"But it seems that God had other plans for me and our people because at that time, due to our small size and location, we had nochoice but to cater to small entrepreneurs in that area," Tambunting said.

"What started out as work borne out of necessity soon turned into a meaningful and gratifying work. Dealing with small entrepreneurs opened my eyes to the wonderful realization that we were making an impact where it counts the most—with the marginalized sector and small entrepreneurs in the countryside. And we felt good about it," he said.

The bank's business plan was thus changed to focus on lending to SMEs.

"We vowed that no matter how big our bank becomes we will focus on SMEs," he said.

Meanwhile, Prieto-Romualdez said it was a rare opportunity to bring such people together in one room.

"It's a kind of room where all of the presidential candidates would like to sit around and get endorsement from," she said.

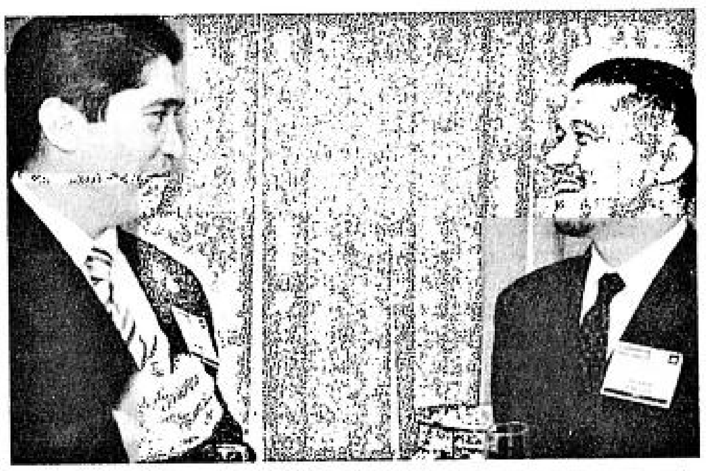
Among the VIPs who graced the affair were former MAP honorees—retail tycoon Henry Sy with son Hans, Washington SyCip, former Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Gabriel Singson, Jollibee Foods Corp. chair and CEO Tony Tan Caktiong.

INQUIRER
congratulates
Management Man of the Year 2003

INQUIRER President Sandy P. Romualdez with past Management Man of the Year awardees: Tony Tan of Jollibee; Raul T. Concepcion of Concepcion Industries; Roy Navarro of RCBC; former Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Gabriel Singson, MAP president Dave Balangue; Jesus P. Tambunting of Plantersbank; Oscar Hilado of Phinma; Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto

INQUIRER chair Marixi Prieto with taipan, Henry Sy, who was one of the last guests to leave

UNRELATED Sys: Ramon Sy of iBank and taipan Henry Sy of SM. Standing here is Gabriel C. Singson.



PLANTERSBANK's EVP Anthony Robles with INQUIRER Publications' Dennis O. Valdes.

MARGARITA Tambunting with husband Jesus, MAP's Management Man of the 2003

RICHWELL Trading's Myrna Co with Washington SyCip.

congratulates
Management Man of the Year 2003

JESUS P. Tambunting receives gifts from Inquirer chair Marixi R. Prieto and president Alexandra Romualdez. Looking on is INQUIRER publisher Isagani Yambot

congratulates
Management Man

INQUIRER chair Marixi R. Prieto with consumer advocate Raul T. Concepcion

A primer on election surveys

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

AS THIS is written, President Macapagal-Arroyo and Fernando Poe Jr. are tied in the polls. One wonders if the trend will continue till May, leading to a nail-biting election. Survey results give the business community a feel for what the elections will bring. Here then is a primer of sorts on political surveys. I will use examples from the data of Social Weather Stations (SWS).

How can a tiny sample of 1,200 respondents reflect the beliefs of an entire nation?

Actually this is the same number used by Gallup for its surveys covering the whole United States. The trick is to make the sample random and representative. You don't have to take an entire pot of soup to taste the soup. Only a spoonful will do, as long as the soup is well-mixed.

To get the right mix for its sample "spoonful," SWS uses computer-generated random numbers, official census data, and Comelec records of electoral precincts.

How come I have never been interviewed for a survey?

Suppose that half of the 80 million Filipinos are voting-age adults: 18 years old or older, the segment of concern in the surveys. That's 40 million people, while the sample size is only 1,200. So your chance of actually getting interviewed is 0.00003. Try your luck instead with the horse races.

How reliable are the numbers?

A sample of 1,200 to 1,500 yields a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. That is, the survey result will differ by the true vote by at most 3 percent. A rule of thumb is that the margin of error is roughly 1 divided by the square root of the sample size.

But what about cheating?

To make sure that there is no hanky-panky, SWS goes on back-checking. A coordinator returns to reinterview some respondents to verify consistency. If any interviewer is caught cheating, she will be immediately fired.

The same logic goes for the entire survey company. Cheat only once, and your corporate credibility is shattered. Bye-bye clients, the firm is dead in the water.

Were the past surveys accurate?

For example, compare the SWS exit poll with the actual COMELEC count in the latest (May 1998) Presidential elections. *(See table 1)*

	SWS Exit Poll	Comelec Tally
Joseph Estrada	39%	40%
Jose de Venecia	16%	16%
Raul Roco	14%	14%
Lito Osmeña	12%	12%
Alfredo Lim	9%	9%
Renato de Villa	5%	5%
Miriam Santiago	3%	3%
Juan Ponce Enrile	1%	1%
Santi Dumlao	0.2%	0.1%
Manuel Morato	0.04%	0.07%

TABLE 1

The rankings were exactly alike, and the SWS score missed the election count by 1 percent at most.

Aren't surveys just another popularity contest?

Going by this view, one may as well ban elections. Forget democracy or the idea of one-person-one-vote. The people can't be trusted to cast their ballots. The vote of the lowly fisherman is not as good as the vote of the Makati executive. Forget the duty of patiently educating the poor.

Won't pre-election surveys discourage those who are trailing before the campaign? won't they just drop out?

The reality is that pollsters save money for dead-end wannabes. They are spared the enormous expense of running a losing campaign. If they know their low standing and they persist, then they will jump in with open eyes. No regrets if they lose.

But won't that make us principled voters powerless before the forces of popularity?

Let's say you want Candidate Best to win, and you feel even more strongly that Candidate Worst must not win. What if you learn that Candidate Worst is leading in the surveys? You can still vote for Candidate Best as a matter of principle. Your alternative is to shift your vote to Candidate Tolerable, who has a fighting chance of beating Candidate Worst. Knowledge of the survey empowers you.

Shouldn't surveys be about issues?

Most SWS surveys are about social conditions and public issues, but the mammoth data base —e.g. the longest time series on poverty in the world—is ignored by the media. These surveys reveal the public's problems and priorities. A shrewd candidate would mine the data for choosing the issues for the campaign.

In many polls in the latter 1990s, the people kept saying that high prices and the lack of jobs were the nation's top difficulties. And the SWS December 1996 national survey asked the people to choose three qualities they sought in a presidential candidate. The top trait was being pro-poor: *(See table 2)*

Pro-poor	64%
Approachable	40
Knowledgeable in running economic affairs	38
Intelligent	38
Never involved in corruption	34
Decisive	27
Enemy of criminals	24
Religious	22
High morality	11

TABLE 2

The Joseph Estrada campaign knew the survey results and crafted the winning slogans, "Erap para sa mahihirap," "Kontra sa pagtaas ng presyo," "Trabaho para sa Pilipino" (Erap for the poor; Against rising prices; Jobs for Filipinos).

Comments to <darroyo@philonline.com>

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Complementing conventional treatment with ear acupuncture

EAR ACUPUNCTURE therapy, also called auricular therapy or auriculotherapy, treats and prevents diseases by stimulating certain points on the auricle, or the external ear, with needles. According to practitioners of ear acupuncture, the auricle is a complete microsystem of the human body, with every nerve and organ and many functional points represented on the ear. It is believed that there are more than 200 specific acupuncture points on the ear.

Acupuncture, the ancient form of therapy developed by the Chinese some 4,000 years ago, has already established itself as an effective complement to conventional forms of treatment. Alternative forms of therapy, like acupressure, acupuncture, reflexology and herbal medicine, have been rediscovered in recent years as a result of people's disenchantment with the unwanted side effects of Western medicine.

Treatment with acupuncture is based on the premise that the body's vital energy-referred to as "chi" in traditional Chinese medicine-should be allowed to flow freely. When the flow of chi is blocked, a person experiences pain and diseases. To correct the imbalance, practitioners of acupuncture insert fine needles in various pressure points all over the body to relieve pain and cure diseases.

Practitioners of ear acupuncture claim that when disorders occur in the internal organs or other parts of the body, various reactions may appear at corresponding areas of the auricle. Auricular reactions may vary from discoloration, tenderness, decreased cetaceous electric resistance, flakiness, and other morphological changes.

Like in body acupuncture, ear acupuncture can be used to alleviate pain and is a good therapy for degenerative conditions such as rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis, as well as in painful conditions like spinal stenosis and multiple sclerosis. Both body and ear acupuncture can be used as a safe and effective complement to conventional medicine to cure a variety of conditions and diseases such as headaches, neck, shoulder and back pains, hypertension, and asthma.

At SynergyMed Center, where the best of Western medical practice is combined with traditional Eastern therapies, ear acupuncture is a relatively new treatment in its roster of exceptional services that include acupuncture, acupressure and the use of herbal medicines. Doctors from Beijing University College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, whose expertise lie on traditional Oriental therapies, work hand in hand with local Western trained doctors to ensure a safe and effective treatment.

SynergyMed offers two choices to use in ear acupuncture therapy: thumbtack needle and ear-seed therapy. Thumbtack needle therapy uses small thumbtack-like needles to stimulate specific acupoints. Ear-seeds, on the other hand, are used for needle-less therapy. Small seeds, such as the seed of Vaccaria segetalis and radish seeds, are pressed tightly to a particular ear acupoint to produce various sensations for therapeutic purpose.

For more inquiries on ear acupuncture, call 631-2611 or visit SynergyMed Center at the 23rd floor of Discovery Suites, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

HONDA AUTO EXCHANGE LAUNCHED

Honda Philippines Inc, through authorized distributor Honda Cars Makati Inc (HCMI), a subsidiary of the Ayala Group of Companies represented by chair and president Rufino Luis T. Manotok (seated 3rd from left) formally sealed a memorandum of agreement with Automall Philippines Corp (APC) represented by chair Roberto F. de Ocampo (seated left) and president and CEO Carlito B. Castrillo (seated 2nd from left) for the launching of the Honda Cars Auto Exchange Program that will highlight the introduction and distribution of competitively priced Honda Certified Pre-owned vehicles of various models and at preferential terms. This program is HCMI-Automall's direct response to the strong clamor of the public for a low-priced but reliable warranted passenger cars and service vehicles. Witnessing the signing are (seated from right) Danilo D. Pedro, assistant vice president for service and parts of Honda Cars Philippines Inc and Ramon M. Zialcita, HCMI general manager. Also shown are (standing from left) Butch R. Salcedo, finance and administrative manager, APC, Jose Paulo B. Castrillo, director for business development, APC, Monina C. Macavinta, head of HR HCMI, Belinda Ramos, finance manager, HCMI, and Joey O. Eustaquio III, branch manager of Honda Cars Alabang. For more details, call HCMI sales departments at 852-6750 to 51 (Makati), 636-7989 or 636-8196 (Pasig), 807-0303 or 809-5055 (Alabang), and 718-2037 or 718-0626 to 27 (Shaw) and APC at 892-6757 or 810-1553.

Insulin resistance needs to be addressed

MEDICAL experts have identified insulin resistance as a key factor that contributes to the development of complications in diabetes.

Diabetes is a chronic, progressive disease associated with high levels of glucose in the bloodstream (hyperglycemia). Diabetes mellitus, the most common type of diabetes, is characterized by beta-cell dysfunction where the pancreas is unable to produce adequate insulin. Insulin resistance also develops, which is a condition wherein the body fails to respond to the circulating insulin effectively.

To compensate for insulin resistance, the pancreas produces more insulin in order to keep blood sugar levels under control.

Eventually, the pancreatic beta-cells tire out and can no longer function properly. This will now cause long-term complications such as damage to the blood vessels and nerve cells, blindness, kidney failure and heart disease. For some people with type 2 diabetes, diet, exercise and weight reduction alone may work initially, but eventually this regimen does not help control high bloc sugar levels.

In these cases, oral medication may be prescribed. Most antidiabetic agents target only one of the severe underlying causes of diabetes.

The complementary actions of the antidiabetic agents metformin and rosiglitazone may maintain optimal blood sugar level control and alleviate insulin resistance in patients with type 2 diabetes. Therefore, the combined use may be indicated for patients whose diabetes is poorly controlled by metformin alone.

According to the United Kingdom Prospective Diabetes Study (UKPDS) published in Lancet, approximately half of patients on monotherapy with metformin or sulphonylurea will require multiple drugs to control to disease within three years.

In another trial which studied 348 patients who had inadequate glucose control on metformin monotherapy for six months, results showed that 28 percent of patients receiving a combination of rosiglitazone and metformin reached the target level compared to eight percent of patients on the near maximum dose of metformin alone.

"There is now mounting evidence confirming that to reach blood sugar levels recommended by experts, many people with type 2 diabetes will need to take combination of therapies with distinct mechanisms of action to attack the disease in different ways," said Dr. Stefano del Prato, professor of endocrinology and metabolism at the School of Medicine, University of Pisa, Italy.

He added that the combination of rosiglitazone maleate and metformin provides two different yet complimentary mechanisms of action. Rosiglitazone maleate targets insulin resistance, while metformin reduces the amount of blood sugar produced by the liver.

The combination of rosiglitazone and metformin in one convenient pill is now available in the Philippines as a product licensed by GlaxoSmithKline, one of the world's largest research-based pharmaceutical companies.

Patients with type 2 diabetes should consult their doctors to learn more about these new treatments.

WEDDINGS MADE SPECIAL WITH THE SONGS OF 92AD

Wedding preparations won't be complete without a checklist of all the important details that need to be finalized. But one simple detail that is not given much priority is the choir for the wedding ceremony. Many consider it as just an extra attraction in a wedding. But many couples have discovered the big difference a choir can do to a wedding. Here's a group that is fast becoming a byword in the wedding scene—92AD. You must have seen them in one of their TV appearances on ABS-CBN. Or you must have heard them in one of their projects with Star Records. But in the wedding circuit, you will most likely hear about them from wedding suppliers, coordinators, or newly married couples. Composed of 10 members of the 1992 batch of the Ateneo College Glee Club Ed and Love Capulong, Junby Carlos, Angeline Wee, Alberto Enero, Yayen Gallardo, Teena Lim, Paolo Ledesma, Marsha Urgino, and Raymund Magdaluyo, 92AD sings a pleasant mix of both traditional and contemporary sound. Together they create music that enhance the spirit of loving during many special occasions. 92AD can be contacted through Love Capulong at 0917-8730495/0917-8304515 or by e-mail at love_almazan-capulong@abs-cbn.com.

SAN BEDA HONORS OCAMPO

Roberto F. de Ocampo is shown being conferred the degree of Doctor of Humane Letters honoris causa by Rev. Fr. Anscar J. Chupungco OSB, rector-president of San Beda College. The other awardees during a special academic convocation held recently were Rosa Rosal, who received the Ora et Labora Award, and the Philippine Accrediting Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities (Paascu), which received the St. Bede Award.

Wedding season starts early at City Garden Hotel Makati

THE WEDDING season is off to an early start at a first-class international business hotel in Makati City.

The hotel, popularly known as City Garden, now has all its doors wide open for marrying couples who want a totally worry-free wedding.

The hotel's wedding packages seem just as irresistible as the marriage proposal itself, all offering elegant and luxurious amenities minus the usual hassles in arranging a grand matrimonial event.

Each of these packages include floral arrangement, wedding cage with doves, two-tiered cake, decorated cake table, sound system, guest book, wedding souvenirs, wine for toasting, fruit punch, overnight room accommodations, breakfast in bed for two, and complimentary use of the hotel's gym, sauna, pool and Jacuzzi.

The amenities form part of all the three available wedding packages, each involving a grand reception for a hundred guests and differing only in the choice of the banquet menu. Each package comes for as low as P59,000.

The couples are also offered great choices for the reception's venue-the function rooms at the third floor, the Le Jardin Restaurant at the second floor, or the hotel's garden roofdeck that gives a magnificent view of the Makati skyline and the rest of the metropolis.

This 23-floor business and leisure property has Italian-inspired rooms with world-class and well-furnished facilities such as high-speed Internet and fax ports, IDD/NDD telephone system, safety deposit box, well-stocked mini-bar, cable TV, laundry and dry cleaning services, and 24-hour room service.

Similarly, the hotel's professionally staffed business center is complete with the latest in electronic and telecommunications equipment such as Internet access, fax and photocopiers, and such services as secretarial assistance, airline ticket reconfirmation, tours and transport bookings, and postal and parcel handling, among others.

Known as Metro Manila's first Internet-ready hotel that offers "affordable luxury", City Garden Hotel Makati has also become the preferred venue for power meetings, business conferences, executive rest and recreation, debut, baptismal and even kiddie parties. One can avail himself of its luxurious amenities and room accommodations for as low as P950+ per day on a twin-sharing basis.

Reservations or inquiries can be made by phone (899-1111), or domestic toll free number 1-800-101-Garden (427336). The hotel is located at 7870 Makati Avenue, in between Kalayaan and Durban streets.

Bits Clips

New Beginnings at 14

THE NEW Beginnings Foundation, a substance abuse treatment center responsible for the rehabilitation of more than a thousand individuals for 14 years now, is celebrating its 14th anniversary on March 20, Saturday, with an affair dubbed "Keep Coming Back to New Beginnings".

HBC's Hair Asia tilt

HBC Home of Beauty Exclusives has been a close partner of salon owners and enthusiasts for decades. Acknowledging the potentials of a new generation of local beauticians to become world class, HBC Home of Beauty Exclusives sponsors the 14th Hair Asia National Open Championship for Hairstyling and Make-Up Competition at the World Trade Center, CCP Complex on March 8. Hairstylists and beauticians from all over the country will compete for a chance to show their skills and talents in the parlor chair and bag the grand prize of a trip to Milan, Italy. Hair Asia will also recognize the country's top eight make-up artists of the year. San-San Cosmetics is the official make-up of the competition. San San Cosmetics is the only make-up with vitamins. It is available exclusively at HBC Home of Beauty Exclusives with over 90 stores nationwide.

Nick Joaquin launches three books

ANVIL Publishing and the Cultural Center of the Philippines are pleased to announce the launch of "Culture and History", a ground-breaking treatise by National Artist for Literature Nick Joaquin on how Philippine history and Filipino identity have been shaped by the tools of our native and adopted cultures. This will be launched on March 10 at 6 p.m. in the CCP Little Theater Lobby. "Culture and History" will be re-issued along with other Joaquin classics, "Cave and Shadows" and "Tropical Gothic." National Artist Nick Joaquin is celebrated for his numerous works as a fictionist, playwright, poet, journalist, and biographer. Copies of "Cave and Shadows" and "Tropical Gothic" are already available at all National Bookstore and Powerbooks branches. For inquiries, call Anvil Publishing at 637-5692.

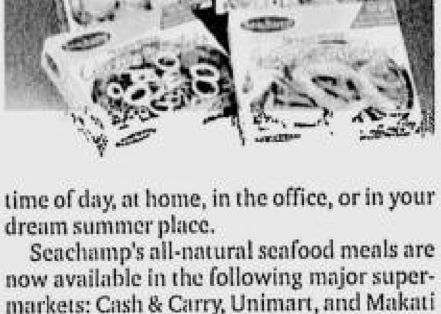
ProductFILES

Seachamp Hearty Meals

GREET the summer season with a treat of delicious, healthy seafood meals that are quick and easy to prepare. Seachamp's Hearty Meals are complete seafood-topped rice meals that can be served in as little as four minutes.

Just open a pack of Seafood Medley, Fish in Sweet and Sour Sauce, Calamares en su Tinta or Shrimps in Teriyaki Sauce, stick it into your microwave over or heat on your stove top, and your meal is ready. No fuss, no sweat, and still you get a nutritious, delicious seafood meal that is low in fat and is all-natural.

Let your whole family enjoy a delicious protein-rich meal that is ready to serve any time of day, at home, in the office, or in your dream summer place.



Seachamp's all-natural seafood meals are now available in the following major supermarkets: Cash & Carry, Unimart, and Makati Supermarket, Crossings, CVC, Eunilane, Hi-Top, Landmark, Metro, Shoppersville, Shopwise, SM Hypermarkets, and Essel in San Fernando, Pampanga.

Empowering the Filipino on May 10

MAPping THE FUTURE

Edward L. Fereira

THE FILIPINO is again making history. Two months from today, or May 10 to be precise, we as a people shall again have the power to make or break destiny. We shall be electing our leaders to steer our country to wealth or to destitution … to heights or to disillusionment … to progress or to decay.

When the election campaign was formally launched by the Commission on Elections in February, the Filipino has been inundated with the names of the candidates, hand signals, proselytizing, posters, ads, sticker-ridden private cars, and all the available techniques known to man to have each candidate's name firmly etched on the consciousness of every eligible voter.

On May 10, 2004, the "tao" is king for a day. Again, Rizal's immortal words of "The pen is mightier than the sword" is given rightful sway and reaffirmed. The written word—in this singular instance—the name on the ballot is more important than all the AK-47s, grenades, and the "macho" armaments combined to establish one's identity in our very own matriarchal society.

Witness the sudden decline in shoot-outs and kidnappings. They would not dare decimate the voters, lest that would be the swing vote. What a conundrum!

Lest we all wax cynical, let us not forget that segment of society that strives hard to preserve the sanctity of the ballot. They are cognizant of the significance of the election process—which cannot be vested on non-Filipinos. The right to vote is protected by responsible and mature Filipinos.

Socio-civic groups and responsible business have taken on the arduous and thankless challenge of imparting the ideals of responsible voting, especially to our kindred folk in the far reaches of our over 7,000 islands.

As president of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) in 2003, we strove to raise the already high level of consciousness of our more than 700 members representing a veritable cross-section of Philippine business.

Our 2003 general membership meetings were punctuated by offerings from experts and well-known speakers in Parliamentary government (February), BIR transformation (March), separation of church and state (April), Comelec computerization (May), good governance (September), government revenue reforms (October). In addition, various projects and discussions were undertaken to enable its members to obtain first-hand information on timely issues that they can use for their own decision-making and can make known to their peers and subordinates.

Our year was likewise marked by the conferment of the Management Man of the Year Award, capping our association's efforts to recognize a single individual who epitomizes the lofty business ideals that the MAP continues to espouse.

Perhaps it is not a Quixotic dream that the professionalism inculcated in each one of the members of the MAP over more than five decades will one day be part and parcel of the make-up of the Filipino. That our children and the generations to come will evolve into a proud race of Filipinos like our forefathers, when to be a Filipino is a badge of honor handed down as a legacy to one's children and descendants.

While it is a sad fact of life that it took only a generation to rob our race of such pride of country and of self, there is still indeed a ray of hope. For so long as the Filipinos who are not within the protective cocoon of their own shores are still able to religiously obey the rules and follow the standards of the other countries they choose to be in (on the sad lament that their own country is going downhill), we cannot write off the Filipino as a sad, demented case.

The Filipino's mettle should be unearthed in his own shores. We should shake off the sad, outdated costume of being spoiled brats in our own country. Let us take care of our own. Let us start on May 10 and make our one vote count!

(The article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is the president and CEO of Ferycor International Management Group Inc., national president of Philippine Movement for Good Governance or Philmo…Go!Go and immediate past president of Management Association of the Philippine. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph).

New rule on date of annual meeting

Corporate Securities Info

Raul J. Palabrica

THE PHRASE "any day of the month" can no longer be used to describe the date of the annual meeting of corporations.

In response to a recent query (Opinion No. 04-04), the SEC clarified the meaning of the provision in Section 50 of the Corporation Code which states that "regular meetings of stockholders or members shall be held annually on a date fixed in the by-laws, or if not so fixed, on any date in April of every year as determined by the board of directors or trustees."

The commission en banc has interpreted the word "date" to mean "a day or time of occurrence" and the word "fixed" as equivalent to "as stated." Thus, the phrase "on a date fixed in the by-laws" shall be taken to mean "a day or time of occurrence as stated in the by-laws."

Following this interpretation, the SEC has disallowed the phrase "any day of a particular month" as the date of the annual meeting stated in the by-laws of corporations.

Amendment

The SEC stressed that the date of the annual meeting shall either be: (1) the specific date as fixed in the by-laws of the corporation, or (2) any date in April as determined by the board of directors or trustees if there is no such fixed date in the by-laws of the corporation.

Accordingly, the agency has ordered the correction of the pertinent portion of the Express Lane Form for corporations to specify the date of the annual meeting. Corporations whose by-laws use the phrase "any day of a particular month" as the date of their annual meeting have been required to indicate the change to a specific date simultaneous with the filing of any application for amendment of their corporate papers.

Definitions

Lack of familiarity with the documents that government offices use in dealing with the business sector can sometimes be frustrating. It could result in the loss of a bid or, if it is won, in unexpected financial liabilities.

Replying to a question raised by a company that is doing business with the Department of Health, acting Justice Secretary Merceditas Gutierrez explained (in Opinion No. 04, Series of 2004) the meaning and scope of "executive orders," "circulars" and "orders."

EOs are acts of the President providing for rules of a general or permanent character to implement or execute constitutional or statutory powers.

Administrative issuances of department secretaries and heads of bureaus, offices or agencies are in the form of circulars or orders.

Circulars refer to issuances prescribing policies, rules and regulations, and procedures promulgated pursuant to law that are applicable to individuals and organizations outside the government and are designed to implement the provisions of the law or provide the means of carrying them out, including information relating to them.

Orders are issuances directed to particular offices, officials or employees concerning specific matters, including assignments, detail and transfer of personnel, for observance and compliance by all concerned.

(Postscript: In a nutshell, circulars are meant to govern transactions with the public, while orders cover the internal activities of government offices. It should be noted though that no EO or circular can impose fines or other forms of sanctions unless authorized by law and after publication in the Official Gazette or a newspaper of general circulation.)

BICOL Hair Export employs 1,000 and in 2003 produced 24,000 wigs and generated P65 million in sales.

Secret of largest wigmaker in RP: One-minute management technique

By Michael B. Jaucian
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—Richard Huenefeld, 78, owner of the Bicol Hair Export Corp., the country's biggest maker of handmade wigs and toupees, believes his success came from the one-minute management technique.

Huenefeld, who also owns the Bicol Bay Export Corp. and Ligao Woodcraft Export, says when he decides on something, it must be implemented immediately, without spending too much time talking and weighing of pros and cons.

This enabled him to grab at opportunities as soon as they presented themselves. Couple this attitude with his genuine concern for his employees and his companies went to the top.

Corporate secretary Dianne Fabros says through Huenefeld's leadership, every worker goes to work with enthusiasm and desire to help the company achieve its goals.

Experience

Huenefeld, who earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Germany, first went into business in the Philippines through the export company his father set up in Manila.

He, however, decided to say goodbye to the concrete jungle of Manila because he fell in love with Bicol. Thus, he set up his own business in Sto. Domingo town in Albay, which produced abaca products.

Aside from making abaca rugs, which were in vogue in the United States in the '60s and '70s, Huenefeld opened abaca rug factories in Daraga and Sto. Domingo towns in Albay and in Virac, Catanduanes.

Later, he branched out into making abaca table mats, handbags and doormats.

Soon, his company became the biggest exporter of handicrafts in the Philippines.

In 1982, Huenefeld sold his company to Hutchison International Ltd. of Hong Kong, now owned by Li Ka Shing, one of the wealthiest man in Hong Kong.

Aborted rest

He had hoped to enjoy a well-deserved rest and build low-cost homes as a hobby, but Huenefeld was soon approached by Japanese buyers of traditional wooden spoons used in noodle houses in Japan.

Since nobody in the Philippines could make the spoons, Huenefeld designed his own machines and found himself back in the export business.

He also opened a factory in Ligao City to manufacture coco peat used as plant conditioners and coco fiber matting used by bed factories in Manila.

He says the coirmats protect the rubber foam mattresses from the steel springs.

In 1990, Huenefeld pirated 25 expert wigmakers from a German company in Manila, which was brought down by labor problems.

With this Philtranco busload of skilled wigmakers, Bicol Hair Export Corp. was born and now ranks as the premier wig manufacturer and exporter in the Philippines.

For 2003 alone it produced 24,000 wigs and generated P65 million in sales.

Huenefeld has an advantage because the Bicolano workers have a background in fine crochet making. Hence, it was easy for them to knot top-quality wigs.

Since the demand for wigs was high, additional branches were opened in Albay province to as far as Sorsogon.

As a result, the wig business in Bicol has provided employment to many Bicolanos, especially in the depressed areas that are often visited by typhoons that affect coconut farms.

Employee benefits

With a handsome pay scheme from the company, Huenefeld claims that most of his 1,000 workers have built their own homes and some top employees own as many as three cars.

Huenefeld believes in profit-sharing and, as a good Christian, he always says, "You cannot bring it with you."

Recently, Huenefeld built a resort called Jungle Beach. It is private and only for his co-workers.

Bicol Hair Export Corp. supplies 15 foreign countries but the biggest market is Japan through a firm, Art Nature.

According to Huenefeld, Art Nature serves as the company's major buyer of wigs and toupees. It serves more than 200 salons all over Japan.

Wigs have export prices of $70 to $100 and retailed in Japan for up to $4,000.

Bicol Hair Export Corp. was chosen as the most outstanding countryside investor in the medium-scale industry in 1996 and was again proclaimed by Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas in 2002 as the first outstanding medium-scale enterprise.

It also ranks as the best taxpayer in Legazpi City.

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BUSINESS *Monday*

Job interview pointers

GOODNESS GRACES

Lia S. Bernardo

Q: What should I do during interviews to become confident enough to answer questions? What should I keep in mind so that I wouldn't get so anxious?

A: Your primary aim is to convince the interviewer that you will be able to do the job competently, can benefit the company and that you are the best candidate for the job.

The first thing you need to remember when going to job interviews is that you need to be absolutely prepared. Read up on the company. Go through annual reports, websites, articles etc. Be familiar with its products or services. Have a working knowledge of how they do things.

Based on this research, have prepared questions to ask during the interview. You are evaluated based on the questions you ask during the interview, not just your answers. Some questions to raise include:

- What will be my responsibilities?
- Where will I fit into the overall organizational structure?
- Who will I report to?
- Where does he/she fit into the structure?
- Who will report to me?'
- What do you expect me to do in the first six months?
- What level of performance do you expect from me?
- Who are your customers?
- Where is the company going? Expansion plans?
- What are the chances of advancement/promotion in this position? When?

Once you have done enough research on the company, you will be confident enough to answer some of the questions asked you. Review your resume. Try to prepare answers to questions that you yourself may ask during an interview.

Dress appropriately for the interview. Wear a business suit, as it is the most effective way of communicating professionalism. Take time to evaluate what you are wearing from your hairstyle to your shoes. Remember, your interviewer will make a judgment in the first 30 seconds based solely on the way you look.

Pay attention to body language. You should always look attentive. Never slouch in your chair. Never lie to anyone in an interview. Your body language, tone of voice and the words you use will probably give you away. Classic body language giveaways include scratching your nose and not looking directly at the other person when you are speaking to them. Fidgeting shows boredom and restlessness. Crossing arms indicates an unwillingness to listen and tapping your foot is distracting and a sure sign of boredom.

Do not talk badly of your previous employer. And never make excuses for failures. Admit your mistakes and show how you have learned from them.

You will find that once you have prepared and built your confidence you will be able to communicate effectively with your interviewer.

(E-mail etiquette queries to etiquetteconsultants@hotmail.com.)

Prospects in RP during an election year

INTERNATIONAL BUZZ

Rico Hizon

THE PHILIPPINE economy's resilience will be tested in the coming months during a potentially volatiie election campaign. Filipinos go to the polls on May 10 to vote for a new president and 17,000 other elected officials.

Political uncertainty has shunted the peso to record lows against the dollar to around 56.30. And recent data showing sluggish growth in exports has raised concern, the economy, already handicapped by a weak peso and jitters ahead of the polls, is slipping behind its neighbors and losing out to Chinese competition.

After brushing with recession early last year, the economy has entered a mild recovery, driven mainly by healthy agriculture growth and consumer spending. It posted GDP growth of 4.5 percent in 2003 and the government is forecasting growth of up to 5.8 percent in 2004.

Dr. Chandru Rajam, regional director of the Economist Corporate Network and John Cairns, head of research with IDEA Global shared with me their views on the direction of the Philippine economy this year.

Can the buoyant growth figures in 2003 be replicated this year? What is your forecast?

Cairns: Yes it probably can given that the agriculture sector is looking like it will pick up strongly. There will also be significant base effects given that the first quarter of 2003 saw weakness in all three main sectors. Growth in the first quarter of this year could see 5.2 percent year on year.

Rajam: Stronger than expected growth last year has helped create a base for better growth in 2004 particularly as exports contributed very little to growth in 2003 and external demand should be much better this year. Our growth forecast for the first quarter is 4.5 percent.

Won't growth be clouded by the political uncertainty ahead of elections on May 10?

Cairns: The services sector might see some weakness as might the industry sector. However, the latter will be supported by the continued recovery in exports on the back of a recovery in global sentiment.

Rajam: Yes, very much so. Given that the president is trailing behind a political unknown, Fernando Poe Jr., it is hard for the business community to have a lot of confidence. Uncertainty will continue until the elections.

The government expects the economy to be driven by electronics and agricultural exports, domestic demand and at least $7 billion sent home each year by Filipinos working abroad—where could the economy experience some weakness? in which sector?

Cairns: Agriculture remains at the mercy of the weather but given that we had El Niño in 2002 and 2003, we expect 2004 to be a pretty good year weather-wise. OFW inflows might also be less if political uncertainty ramps up and OFWs expect continued PHP weakness but the scope for reductions here is limited. The main source of fragility will be the industry sector as the Philippines remains overly dependent on the US and electronics and is also vulnerable to competition from China in both electronics and textile exports.

Rajam: The country's ability to compete with Chinese electronics in OECD markets. Remittances should buoy consumption and, by extension, services. The risks: political uncertainty, Poe's early mistakes from learning-on-the-job, military coups all contribute to concerns for businesses.

Will the country be able to keep its budget deficit in check in an election year?

Cairns: It really depends on who's in power come June. The finance secretary has also given a mixed performance so far and we will need more time to assess their abilities. Although whether the market and ratings agencies will consider this sufficient is another question given that the target is not particularly ambitious at 4.2 percent of GDP. Note also that the 2004 budget has actually not been passed yet.

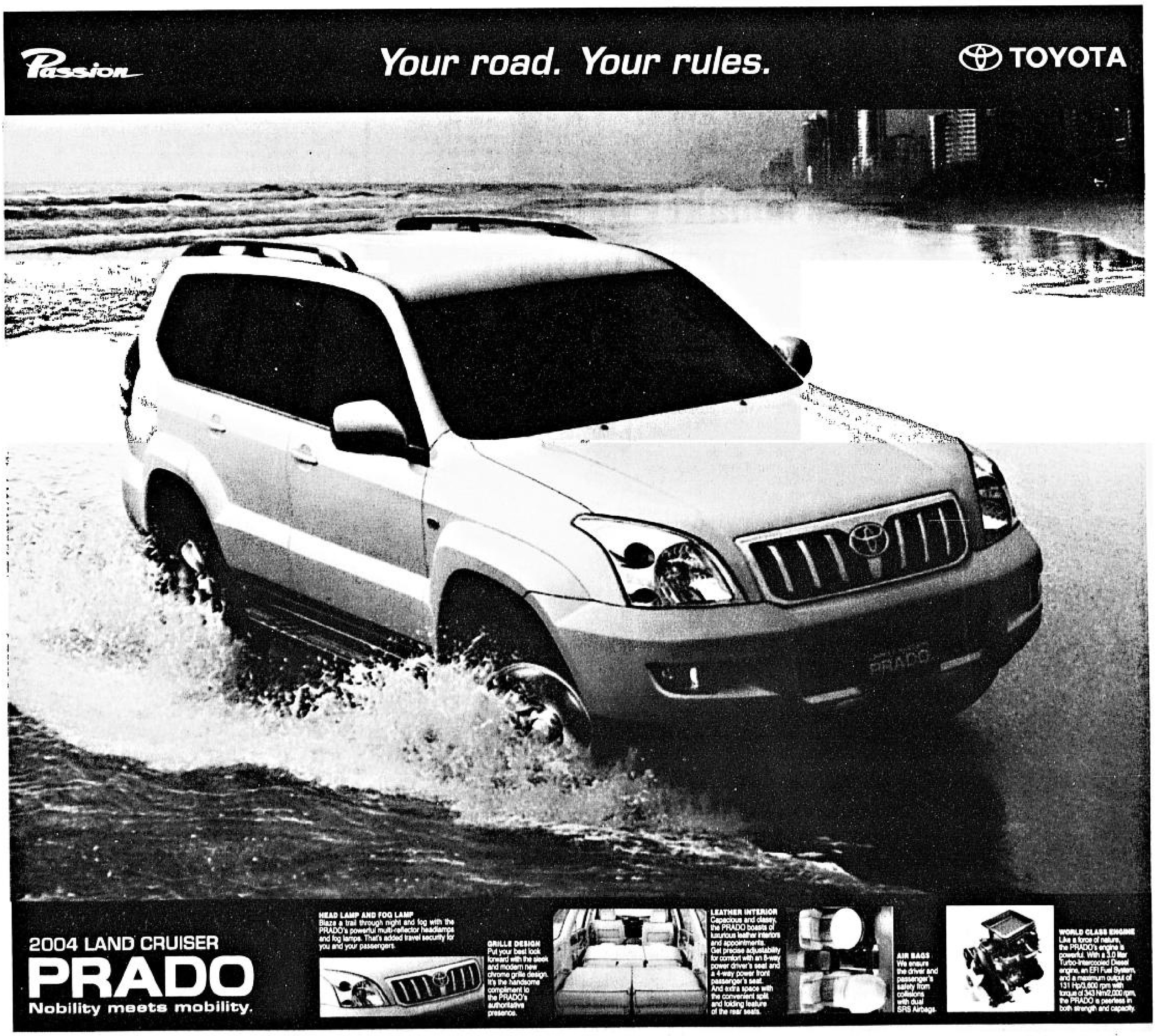
Rajam: We think that the government will breach its budget deficit ceiling of P198 billion or $3.5 billion for 2004 due to populist pre-election spending, poor tax administration and a failure to win passage for politically unpopular tax reforms.

The Philippines Southeast Asian neighbors, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam have been enjoying a lot of attention from foreign direct investors. Is the Philippines in the radar screens of investors as an investment destination?

Cairns: The Philippines will get some of these inflows but it will likely lag its neighbors given the multitude of domestic concerns. Apart from the politics, the debt profile continues to remain a worry, as does the poor state of infrastructure. The export sector also remains worrisome with the Philippines' exposure to China still rather small, despite the strong growth there. If FPJ comes to power, these concerns will grow significantly.

Rajam: Overall, foreign direct investment inflows into Asean should strengthen, because of the stellar performance by Thailand and Malaysia and the better than 2003 performance expected in the rest of Southeast Asia. However, the Supreme Court's ruling that the 1995 Mining Act is unconstitutional and the consequent adverse reaction in stock markets on foreign mining company stocks will be a dampener on FDI's at least into that sector, if not more broadly.

(Rico Hizon anchor's BBC World's Asia Business Report from Monday to Friday. He is based in Singapore. Send feedback at rico.hizon@bbc.co.uk)



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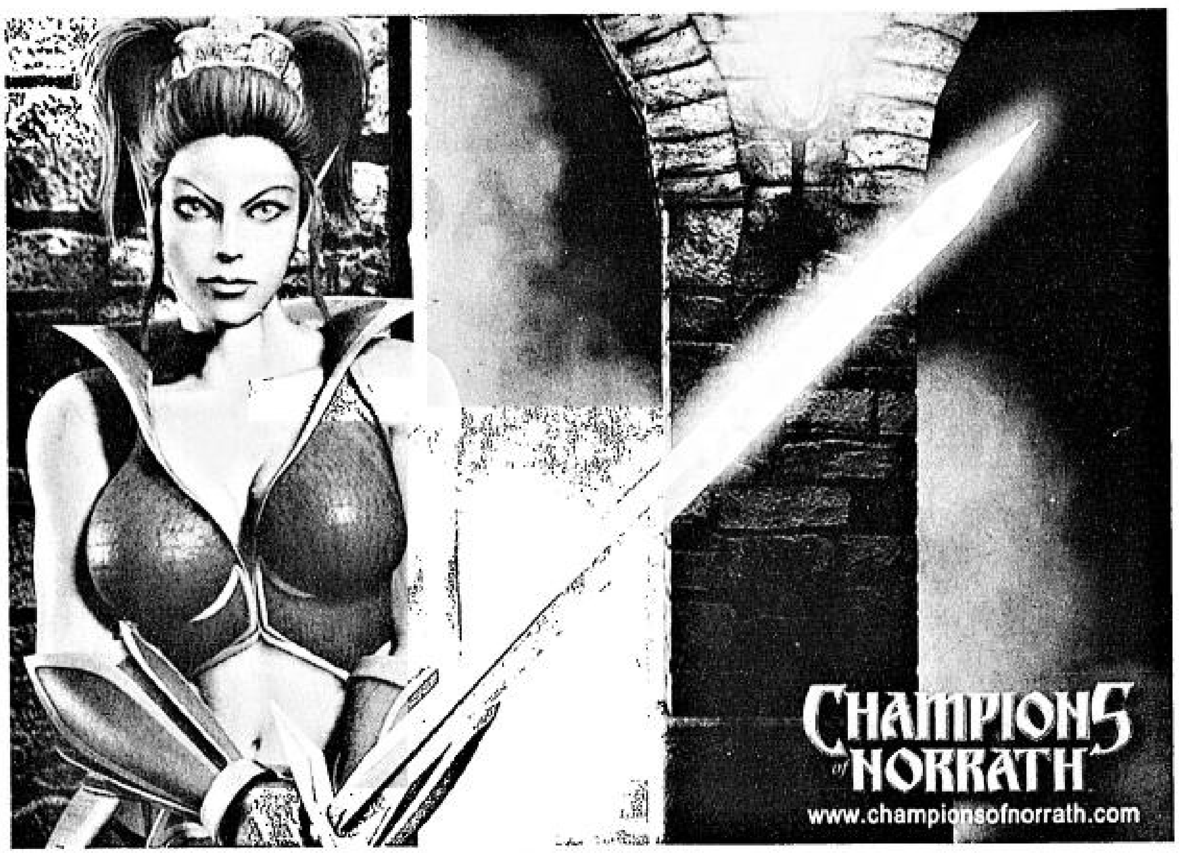
Editor **Leo Magno**

GlobeQUEST BAX:
RP's 1st DWDM-based service for Corporate Customers
(See page C2 and C3 to know more about GlobeQUEST BAX)



Champions of Norrath mixes Baldur's Gate with Everquest

By Leo Magno

FOR your own sanity, never ever play these two games at the same time: "Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance 2" and "Champions of Norrath: Realms of Everquest." You'll end up doing a John Nash. Schizophrenia will settle in while you're trying to sort out which one of several quests you're trying to complete as a dwarf or a high elf cleric.

Both games are third-person adventure and role-playing dungeon crawlers. I played Baldur's Gate on the Xbox and Champions of Norrath (CoN) on the PS2, but eventually I had to decide on finishing one first, and I opted to focus on CoN.

CoN is an online game on the PS2, published by Sony Online Entertainment and developed by Snowblind Studios. Washington-based Snowblind was founded in 1997 and made games for the extinct Nintendo 64 console. They are best known for two games: "Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance" (the first one) and now, "Champions of Norrath: Realms of Everquest."

The talented people at Snowblind developed the first Baldur's Gate for Interplay, but begged off from doing Part 2 because they had already signed up with Sony to develop CoN. That's why if you've played Baldur's

CHAMPIONS/ C4

Computer experts show how bar exam questions hacked

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

COMPUTER forensics experts from the Supreme Court revealed how the disbarred lawyer who leaked one of the subjects included in the September 2003 bar exams was able to "hack" into one of the examiners' computer.

The leakage caused lawyer Danilo de Guzman to be disbarred from practicing law and examiner Marcial O.T. Balgos to get a tongue-lashing from high court officials.

In a resolution, the high court voted 12-0 to reprimand Balgos, examiner in the 2003 Mercantile Law exam and senior partner in the Balgos and Perez Law Office.

De Guzman was Balgos' assistant.

According to Ivan Uy, chief information officer of the Supreme Court, De Guzman used simple hacking techniques to get unauthorized access to Balgos' computer.

Balgos was responsible for drafting the questions for Mercantile Law, one of seven subjects included in the 2003 bar exams. At that time, Balgos was using his computer at his law office to draft the exam questions.

Uy said Balgos' computer was connected to a local area network (a network of computers), to which De Guzman also had access. De Guzman, working from his computer, was able to access Balgos' files through the local area network, and copy the Mercantile Law questions from the examiner's computer.

A Supreme Court investigation committee found that 82 percent of the questions asked in the Mercantile Law exam were leaked by De Guzman to his fraternity brothers.

"(De Guzman) activated the file-sharing module of the Windows operating system without letting (Balgos) know," Uy said, citing a report which he and his team had filed with the Supreme Court.

"So whatever (Balgos) was typing and saving into his computer, De Guzman was able to gain access to it," he added.

Although not exactly using a sophisticated method of cracking into a computer, Uy said De Guzman had unauthorized access to the computer, which under the E-commerce Law is considered hacking.

"It's still hacking because he didn't have the authority to access (Balgos') files," Uy added.

The high court said that when De Guzman downloaded the test questions from Balgos' computer without Balgos' knowledge and permission, it amounted to a criminal act of larceny.

"It was theft of intellectual property; the test questions were intellectual property of Attorney Balgos, being the product of his intellectual and legal knowledge," the Supreme Court said.

Uy and his team of computer forensic experts—Jovito Salonga and Benjamin Katly—were able to uncover De Guzman's activities after going through his computer and the network's logs.

"It did require an insider investigative team and computer forensics skill to uncover how he did it," Uy said.

More than 5,400 law graduates took the 2003 bar examinations at the De La Salle University.

Compensation is key issue in VoIP dispute

By Alexander F. Villafania
Contributor

PLOTTING out a viable revenue stream from Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VoIP) services is still one of the biggest hindrances to the technology's use in the Philippines, according to an official of one of the country's biggest Internet service providers (ISPs).

ISP Mosaic Communications (MozCom) president William Torres said remuneration is one of the salient discussion points on whether or not VoIP should be considered a traditional voice service and not as a value-added Internet service.

"There are ways of earning from VoIP services because of its potential as a more cost-effective alternative to the traditional PSTN," Torres said.

Without urging either the Public Telephone Exchange (PTE) providers (traditional phone networks) or ISPs to come to an agreement on how to bill VoIP service, Torres said he hopes the service would be unregulated.

Incidentally, both PTEs and ISPs said they could charge for VoIP. On the other hand, they would not discuss whether they could come up with guidelines regarding a co-billing system.

Based on global research by industry consultants Frost & Sullivan, about 75 percent of global voice traffic would be done through VoIP by 2007. By then, sales of VoIP equipment would already hit $2.7 billion. Southeast Asia alone would achieve $1.2 billion during the same period, with a 57.1-percent compounded annual growth rate.

A draft memorandum circular released last month by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) regarding the regulation of VoIP in the Philippines has sparked renewed debates between the telecommunications providers and the ISPs. The memo disallows non-PTEs from offering VoIP services. In this case, these are ISPs which are categorized as value-added service (VAS) providers.

The Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co. (PLDT), the biggest communications provider disputing the use of VoIP by ISPs, stood firm on its argument that providing VoIP services is no different from the service being done by the PTEs.

Ariel Roda, senior vice president for PLDT's business development, said that VoIP services tend to have a "destructive" effect on PTEs because VoIP providers have little or no investment on infrastructure, unlike the telecommunications providers.

Furthermore, Roda said that VoIP services do not have that much demand in the Philippines primarily because most people use mobile phones instead of regular voice calls.

"People here would rather send text messages than do voice calls, even through landline because it's cheaper and is more accessible. We don't see a demand at least for now," Roda said.

However, some private companies believe major telecommunications providers seek the monopolization of VoIP service. They say that VoIP does not categorically fall under the traditional voice call service.

Jojie Yap, president of the Philippine Internet Service Organization (PISO), said VoIP should be considered as a value-added service (VAS), not as a PTE service. She insisted that the technical nature of VoIP is similar to any data traveling through the Internet, which is mostly unregulated.

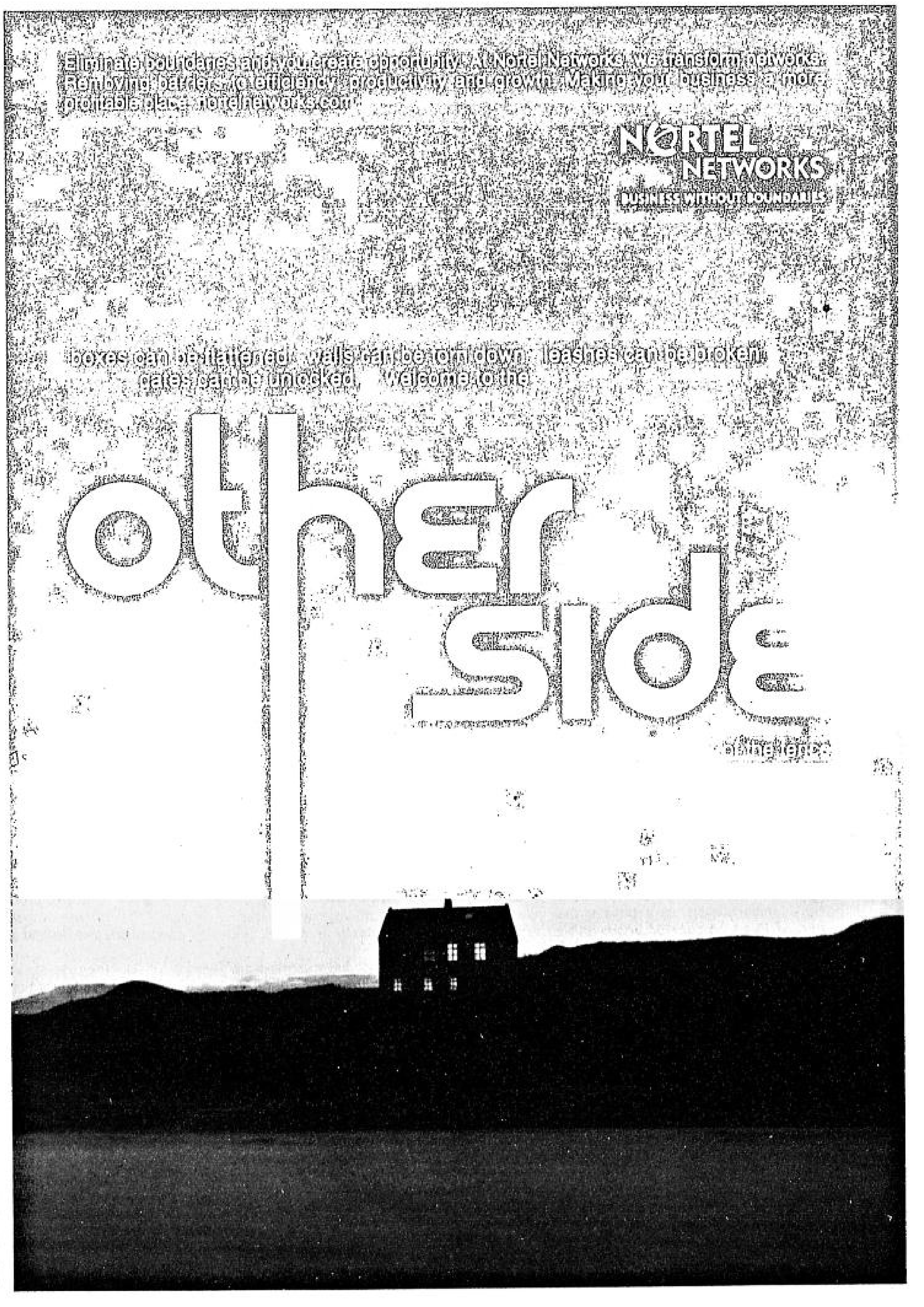
In a VoIP environment, voice calls are divided into data packets that are sent to a recipient, and then reverted back to their original state. It basically goes through the same process as that of any data sent through the Internet.

"Worldwide, VoIP is a largely free service and left unregulated. Despite all that's being said by the telecommunications providers, VoIP actually helps the local economy by encouraging small entrepreneurs to offer the same or similar services," Yap said.

Yap, who is also the president of ISP Pacific Internet, said that regulating VoIP in the Philippines would discourage other ISPs to become more innovative in the delivery of their services. She also insisted that regulation is not the best way, citing as an example the unsuccessful attempt by the Minnesota government to regulate VoIP late last year.

In the middle of the debate is the NTC, which has been receiving flak from both sides. For now, the NTC said it continues to follow the existing rules, particular-

COMPENSATION/ C4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Globe QUEST BAX
BROADBAND ACCESS

Last Mile Access Solution for Customers' Ultra-High Speed Network Needs

GIL B. GENIO
Chief Executive Officer
Innove Communications

JESUS C. ROMERO
GlobeQUEST Head

For the first time in the Philippines, businesses now have access to an ultra-high speed fiber optic network at a much lower cost and faster deployment rate through the last mile solution being offered by GlobeQUEST, the corporate business group of Innove Communications.

Utilizing Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) and next-generation Synchronous Digital Hierarchy (SDH) technologies, GlobeQUEST's Broadband Access Services (BAX) give customers direct and uninterrupted access to a fiber optic network which has a staggering total capacity of 80 Gigabits per second (Gbps).

This huge amount of bandwidth translates to roughly one million simultaneous voice calls and is equivalent to downloading 80,000 books per second. In video terms, 80Gbps can broadcast about 13,000 TV channels at the same time.

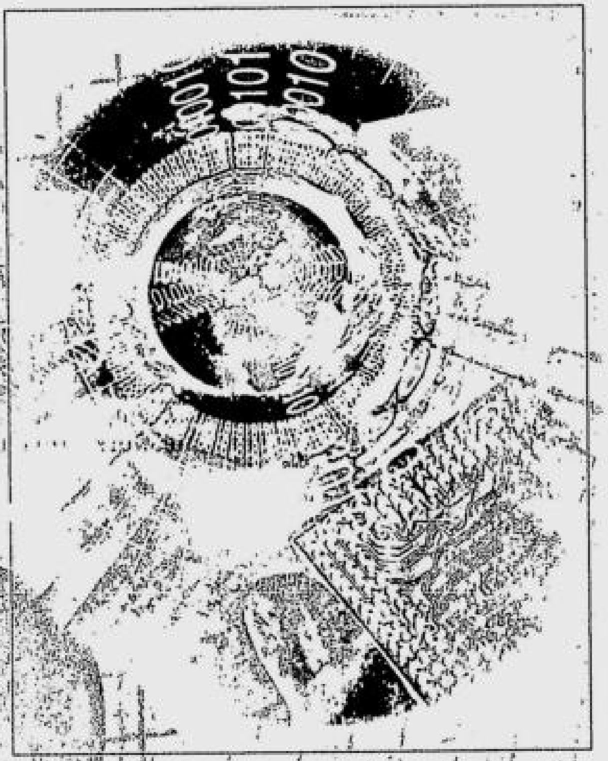
GlobeQUEST BAX is the first DWDM-based service commercially available to enterprise customers in the country. It is positioned to be flexible enough to suit any application and fit the existing network equipment of corporate clients.

DWDM is a technology by which the frequencies of light carried on a single pair of optical fiber are subdivided into discrete wavelengths allowing for greater data transmission.

On the other hand, SDH is a European standard that defines a set of rate and format standards transmitted using optical signals over fiber. It is used primarily in the telecommunications industry to carry telephony, data and recently, IP (Internet Protocol) traffic.

Gil B. Genio, CEO of Innove, said GlobeQUEST BAX is a more cost-effective solution for high-bandwidth access requirements of customers since it can provide a single ultra-high speed line that has lower bandwidth cost per Megabit per second (Mbps). In addition, customers can save on capital investments and maintenance cost of equipment.

"Managing the network is painless for customers. GlobeQUEST BAX is fully managed and monitored up to the clients' premises resulting to a proactive and faster problem management. Any upgrade to the network in terms of bandwidth and services is also non-disruptive to existing operations," he said.



Traditionally, a telecoms provider merely puts up a fiber optic line from its host exchange to the location of a requesting customer, with the latter having to pay for the fiber cost, digging and installation expenses. The dedicated set-up is not only expensive and tedious but also results in under-utilization of fiber.

This time, GlobeQUEST has identified a number of buildings in Metro Manila and Cebu in which a node is placed directly inside the customer building. A node is a distribution point that allows GlobeQUEST to extend a line vertically from the basement of the selected building to the offices of interested customers.

"Businesses located within the same building can just access the in-building GlobeQUEST BAX node. Since new circuit installations require only in-house wiring from an access node to the customer equipment, customers are then able to respond more quickly to changes and opportunities in their business environment," said Jesus C. Romero, GlobeQUEST head.

Romero said GlobeQUEST can also do an off-net implementation by extending a line from the nearest access node to an adjacent building. "We are pushing our fiber network to the edge, meaning, we are bringing it to customer premises," he said.

At the same time, he said that customers do not have to overprovision lines months in advance in order to anticipate their growing business requirements but simply order lines as the need arises.

With GlobeQUEST BAX, one fiber is divided into 32 channels, with each channel able to carry up to 2.5Gbps. Since GlobeQUEST BAX uses DWDM and next-generation SDH, it can, therefore, adapt to any of the protocols and speeds employed by customers such as DS3, STM-1, Fast Ethernet, Gigabit Ethernet, ESCON and Fiber Channel.

Romero said this allows customers to choose the protocol they need without overhauling their network. Once set up, the system would give customers the flexibility to use the network for various applications such as disaster recovery and off-site storage.

GlobeQUEST BAX is targeted at corporate customers with high bandwidth requirements for point-to-point connectivity such as call centers, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Internet Data Centers (IDCs), banks and financial institutions, multinational corporations (MNCs), and Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies.

"We at GlobeQUEST are confident about the high level of performance and reliability of the GlobeQUEST BAX network and could provide aggressive service level agreements tailored to the customer's specific requirements," he said.

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Case_Study_1:
A Call Center

The Philippine call center industry has been experiencing explosive growth in the past few years. In 2003 alone, the industry grew by 110% from 10,000 to 21,000 seats and is expected to increase by another 80% to 100% this year. Today, the major players are expanding their operations to multiple locations, each of which require a large amount of bandwidth to receive inbound calls mostly from the US.

Makati-based Company X, for instance, provides a variety of technical and customer care support via phone, e-mail and online messaging. To keep up with the huge demand for its services, Company X decided to put up call centers in Ortigas, Libis, and even Cebu City. In addition to requiring high-speed circuits, Company X wants to share expensive server applications for email, CRM (Customer Relationship Management), database and other applications among the branches to save on cost.

GlobeQUEST BAX enables Company X to be competitive in its market by providing highly reliable and scalable, ultra-high speed circuits to its branches with faster delivery time and lower cost per Mbps.

For Company X, this translates to having the ability to be up and running quickly to serve new contracts as they come in. In addition, all branches connected to the GlobeQUEST BAX network are also interconnected. This allows Company X to route incoming calls to any of the branches and for the latter to share LAN-based applications.

Case_Study_2:
A_Bank

In 2001, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) issued a directive for banks to have a comprehensive Business Continuity and Recovery Services (BCRS) plan. BCRS is a way to protect a client's precious data by having them placed in back-up sites in case man-made or natural disasters occur. This is especially true for financial institutions that depend on reliable and continuous transmission of data to run their businesses.

Take the case of Company Y with a traditional hub and spoke architecture using point-to-point leased lines between the main data center and the bank's branches. Company Y subscribes to a traditional BCRS system based on dial up. When disaster strikes the main data center, the branches dial in to the disaster recovery site, load the applications and synchronize data. With a dial-up system, however, the minimum recovery time for Company Y would be 24 hours.

But with GlobeQUEST BAX, all of Company Y's branches can be connected to both the main data center and the disaster recovery site. When the main data center goes down, all the branches are automatically rerouted to the disaster recovery site resulting to shorter recovery time.

The high bandwidth, low latency characteristics of GlobeQUEST BAX make it ideal for real-time business continuity and disaster recovery transport to back-up sites. The ring architecture of the GlobeQUEST BAX network also makes it highly reliable and redundant.

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What you need to know about GlobeQUEST BAX

What is GlobeQuest Broadband Access?

GlobeQUEST Broadband Access Services (BAX) is an ultra-high speed fiber optic network based on a combination of Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) and next-generation Synchronous Digital Hierarchy (SDH) technologies. It natively supports multiple protocols delivered directly to customer premises.

What is Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing or DWDM?

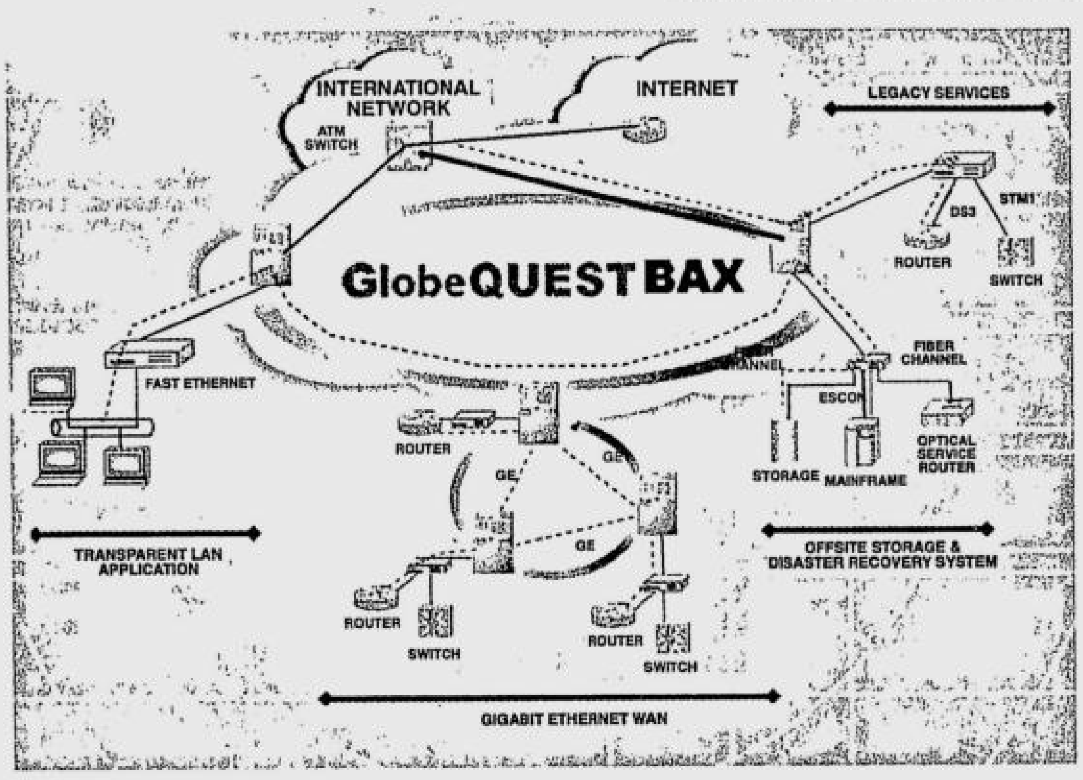
DWDM is a technology by which the frequencies of light carried on a single pair of optical fiber are subdivided into discrete wavelengths allowing for greater data transmission. It allows the multiplexing of multiple optical signals into one big pipe.

What is Synchronous Digital Hierarchy or SDH?

SDH is a European standard that defines a set of rate and format standards transmitted using optical signals over fiber. It is used primarily in the telecommunications industry to carry telephony, data and recently, IP (Internet Protocol) traffic.

What are the services or protocols supported by GlobeQUEST BAX?

GlobeQUEST BAX natively supports the following protocols: traditional high speed lines such as E1, DS3 and STM-1; Ethernet protocols such as Fast Ethernet and Gigabit Ethernet; and data storage protocols such as ESCON and Fiber Channel.



- *E1* is a unit of measurement applied to leased line circuits with a capability of delivering data at 2Mbps.
- *DS3* is a point-to-point private line digital transport service capable of delivering data at 44.7Mbps.
- *STM-1* is the fundamental frame of an SDH network. It is capable of delivering data at 155.52Mbps.
- *Fast Ethernet* is a Local Area Network (LAN) access method with a bandwidth capacity of up to 100Mbps. This protocol allows a customer's multiple office branches dispersed in a metropolitan area to have the look and feel of a single network.
- *Gigabit Ethernet* creates a LAN among geographically separated networks but with a bigger bandwidth of up to 1000Mbps. This protocol is used to interconnect Gigabit routers and is most applicable to large service providers who want to aggregate all their bandwidth into one easily manageable pipe.
- *ESCON (Enterprise Systems Connection)*, with a bandwidth capacity of 200Mbps, is a network technology that allows S/390 mainframe computers to interconnect with other devices such as S/390 computers and storage devices.
- *Fiber Channel*, with a bandwidth capacity of 1000Mbps, is a technology suited for connecting computer servers to shared storage devices and for interconnecting storage controllers and drives. Fiber Channel has begun to replace the Small Computer System Interface (SCSI) as the transmission interface between servers and clustered storage devices.

What is the advantage of GlobeQUEST BAX over a traditional fiber configuration?

The traditional configuration for fiber optic connectivity is to lay down a dedicated dark fiber for each customer order. This leads to inefficient use of fiber strands which are largely underutilized. Since fiber is in limited supply, telcos soon run out of fiber strands.

GlobeQUEST BAX is a fiber optic network infrastructure that multiplexes multiple optical signals from different customers into big pipes. Thus, once fiber is laid out to a customer's premise, the latter is assured of the ability to scale his bandwidth requirements without additional fiber installation.

What are the benefits of GlobeQUEST BAX to enterprises?

The main customer benefits of GlobeQUEST BAX are as follows:

- Ability to respond more quickly to business opportunities
- Flexibility to scale according to business requirements, whatever speed and protocol are required
- Virtually zero downtime. The ring architecture of the GlobeQUEST BAX network makes it highly reliable and redundant.
- Lower network operating expenses, and
- Worry-free network management. GlobeQUEST BAX has a 24 x 7 x 365 proactive monitoring up to the customer's premise.

How is GlobeQUEST able to commit to a fast delivery time for GlobeQUEST BAX services?

The access nodes of the GlobeQUEST BAX network are already located inside the buildings of customers. Thus, installation of a new point-to-point circuit simply requires extending a line from the node to the customer's office in the same building. No outdoor civil works are required.

What makes GlobeQUEST BAX services so flexible for enterprises to use?

GlobeQUEST BAX has ultra-high bandwidth capacity, supports multiple protocols and is scalable. GlobeQUEST BAX allows customers to upgrade bandwidth and provision additional services easily and quickly without disrupting existing operations.

How can GlobeQUEST BAX promise virtually zero downtime?

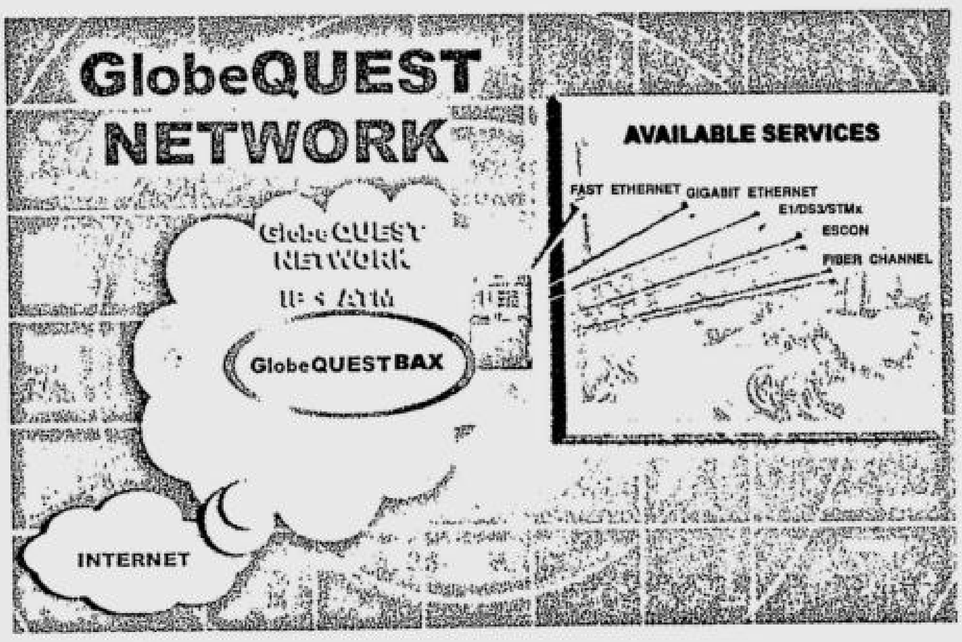
The ring network configuration of GlobeQUEST BAX provides redundancy for customers. If there is a fiber cut in any leg of the network, rerouting takes place automatically in less than 50 milliseconds.

How can GlobeQUEST BAX provide end-to-end proactive monitoring?

GlobeQUEST BAX uses a Network Management System (NMS) software that allows the monitoring of the GlobeQUEST BAX network from the core nodes to the CPEs at the customer premises.

Can a company still avail of GlobeQUEST BAX services even if there is no access node in its building?

Yes, such a company can still be served by extending a fiber optic line from the nearest GlobeQUEST BAX node to the customer premise.



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* * *

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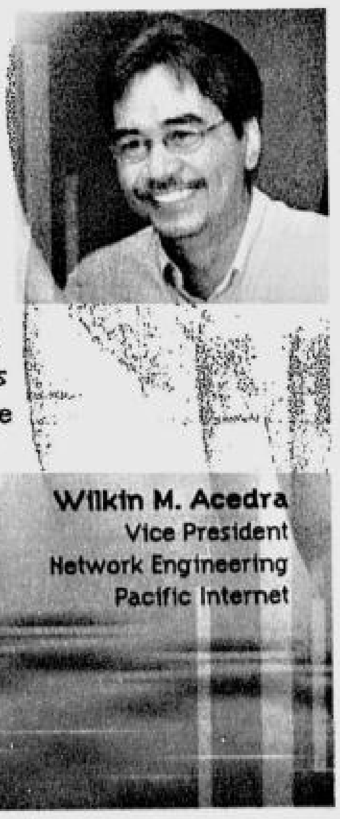

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Wilkin M. Acedra
Vice President
Network Engineering
Pacific Internet

What you need to know about GlobeQUEST BAX

What is GlobeQuest Broadband Access?

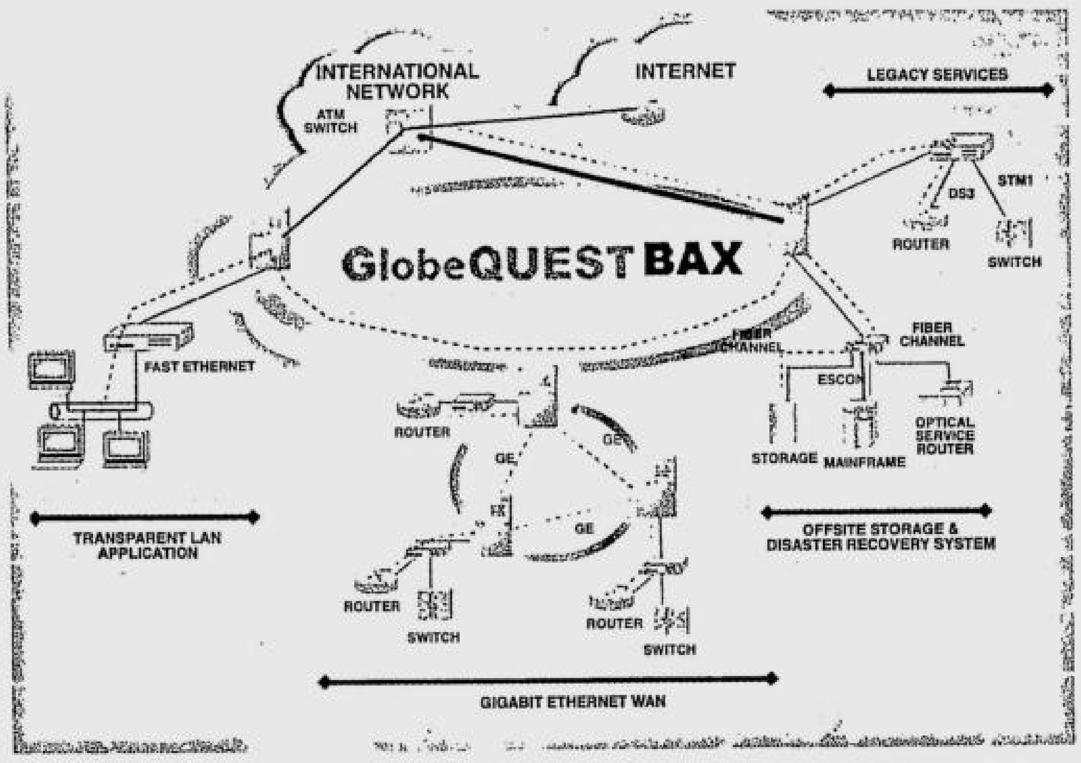
GlobeQUEST Broadband Access Services (BAX) is an ultra-high speed fiber optic network based on a combination of Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) and next-generation Synchronous Digital Hierarchy (SDH) technologies. It natively supports multiple protocols delivered directly to customer premises.

What is Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing or DWDM?

DWDM is a technology by which the frequencies of light carried on a single pair of optical fiber are subdivided into discrete wavelengths allowing for greater data transmission. It allows the multiplexing of multiple optical signals into one big pipe.

What is Synchronous Digital Hierarchy or SDH?

SDH is a European standard that defines a set of rate and format standards transmitted using optical signals over fiber. It is used primarily in the telecommunications industry to carry telephony, data and recently, IP (Internet Protocol) traffic.



What are the services or protocols supported by GlobeQUEST BAX?

GlobeQUEST BAX natively supports the following protocols: traditional high speed lines such as E1, DS3 and STM-1; Ethernet protocols such as Fast Ethernet and Gigabit Ethernet; and data storage protocols such as ESCON and Fiber Channel.

- *E1* is a unit of measurement applied to leased line circuits with a capability of delivering data at 2Mbps.
- *DS3* is a point-to-point private line digital transport service capable of delivering data at 44.7Mbps.
- *STM-1* is the fundamental frame of an SDH network. It is capable of delivering data at 155.52Mbps.
- *Fast Ethernet* is a Local Area Network (LAN) access method with a bandwidth capacity of up to 100Mbps. This protocol allows a customer's multiple office branches dispersed in a metropolitan area to have the look and feel of a single network.
- *Gigabit Ethernet* creates a LAN among geographically separated networks but with a bigger bandwidth of up to 1000Mbps. This protocol is used to interconnect Gigabit routers and is most applicable to large service providers who want to aggregate all their bandwidth into one easily manageable pipe.
- *ESCON (Enterprise Systems Connection),* with a bandwidth capacity of 200Mbps, is a network technology that allows S/390 mainframe computers to interconnect with other devices such as S/390 computers and storage devices.
- *Fiber Channel,* with a bandwidth capacity of 1000Mbps, is a technology suited for connecting computer servers to shared storage devices and for interconnecting storage controllers and drives. Fiber Channel has begun to replace the Small Computer System Interface (SCSI) as the transmission interface between servers and clustered storage devices.

What is the advantage of GlobeQUEST BAX over a traditional fiber configuration?

The traditional configuration for fiber optic connectivity is to lay down a dedicated dark fiber for each customer order. This leads to inefficient use of fiber strands which are largely underutilized. Since fiber is in limited supply, telcos soon run out of fiber strands.

GlobeQUEST BAX is a fiber optic network infrastructure that multiplexes multiple optical signals from different customers into big pipes. Thus, once fiber is laid out to a customer's premise, the latter is assured of the ability to scale his bandwidth requirements without additional fiber installation.

What are the benefits of GlobeQUEST BAX to enterprises?

The main customer benefits of GlobeQUEST BAX are as follows:

- Ability to respond more quickly to business opportunities
- Flexibility to scale according to business requirements, whatever speed and protocol are required
- Virtually zero downtime. The ring architecture of the GlobeQUEST BAX network makes it highly reliable and redundant.
- Lower network operating expenses, and
- Worry-free network management. GlobeQUEST BAX has a 24 x 7 x 365 proactive monitoring up to the customer's premise.

How is GlobeQUEST able to commit to a fast delivery time for GlobeQUEST BAX services?

The access nodes of the GlobeQUEST BAX network are already located inside the buildings of customers. Thus, installation of a new point-to-point circuit simply requires extending a line from the node to the customer's office in the same building. No outdoor civil works are required.

What makes GlobeQUEST BAX services so flexible for enterprises to use?

GlobeQUEST BAX has ultra-high bandwidth capacity, supports multiple protocols and is scalable. GlobeQUEST BAX allows customers to upgrade bandwidth and provision additional services easily and quickly without disrupting existing operations.

How can GlobeQUEST BAX promise virtually zero downtime?

The ring network configuration of GlobeQUEST BAX provides redundancy for customers. If there is a fiber cut in any leg of the network, rerouting takes place automatically in less than 50 milliseconds.

How can GlobeQUEST BAX provide end-to-end proactive monitoring?

GlobeQUEST BAX uses a Network Management System (NMS) software that allows the monitoring of the GlobeQUEST BAX network from the core nodes to the CPEs at the customer premises.

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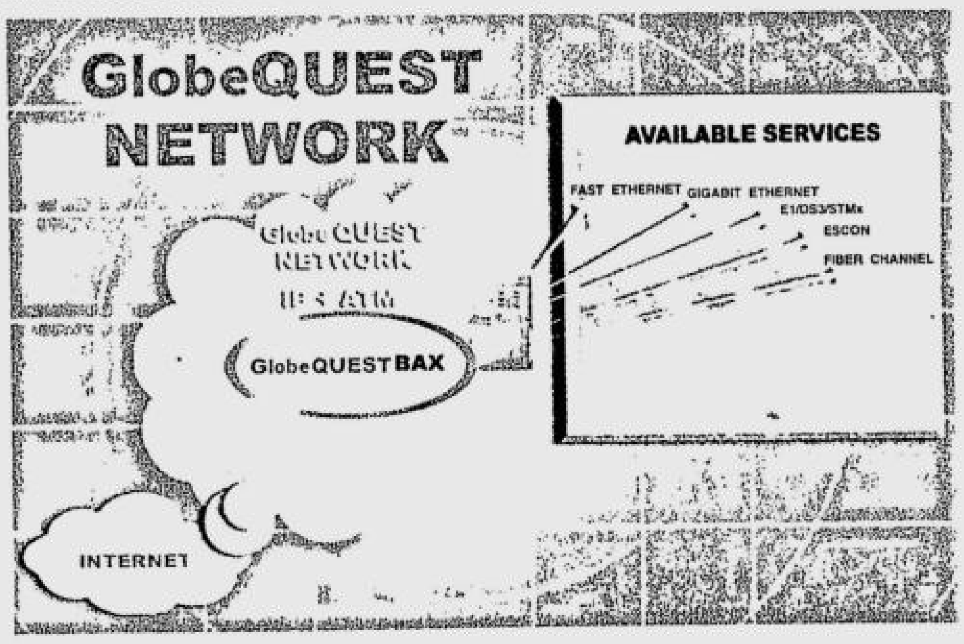

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Compensation...

From page C1

ly Republic Act 7925, otherwise known as the Telecommunications Act.

PLDT's argument is carried by the NTC, which serves as the implementing body of all telecommunication laws in the Philippines. NTC Director for Common Carrier Services Edgardo Cabarios argued that voice calls are still the same, no matter if they pass through the traditional PSTN or through the Internet. Citing RA 7925, Cabarios argued that only authorized PTEs are allowed to offer voice calls. He also said that ISPs can only offer value-added services, of which VoIP is not a part.

"You become a PTE if you offer voice, and that includes VoIP. The main issue is to regulate or not this particular service, no matter what the technology is," Cabarios insisted.

Taking a less argumentative stance is newly installed NTC Commissioner Ronald Solis who assured that the NTC is not about to close its doors on anyone, particularly the ISPs. He said that that they would continue to look into possibilities for VoIP services to work in the Philippines and to get the PTEs and the ISPs to come to an agreement. In addition, Solis said they are also looking at several models, particularly from the United States, on how VoIP is being regulated.

"We'll be having public hearings regarding the use of VoIP. Hopefully, we could have guidelines already before the elections," Solis said.

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NBI raids illegal operations of Ragnarok online

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) raided in Manila several "private" operations of a popular South Korean online game called Ragnarok, a local law enforcement official told Infotech.

NBI agents conducted the raid following a complaint from Level-Up!, according to lawyer Elfren Meneses of the NBI anti-fraud and computer crime division.

Local authorities seized more than 40 computers from the two branches of Internet café "Fraglimits" located on Claro M. Recto and San Miguel in Metro Manila.

In a separate interview, Gil Edeza, chief technical officer for international operations of Level-Up!, said the raid was its last resort after the Internet café refused to stop its "private" operations despite warnings from the company.

Private operations involve the online game running on private computer servers set up in local Internet cafés.

Level-Up! is currently the only Philippine company given by Gravity Corp.—South Korean developer of the game—the right to distribute the game in the country.

Sheila Paul, marketing director of Level-Up!, added that last weeks' raid was meant to send a warning to other private operations of Ragnarok in the Philippines.

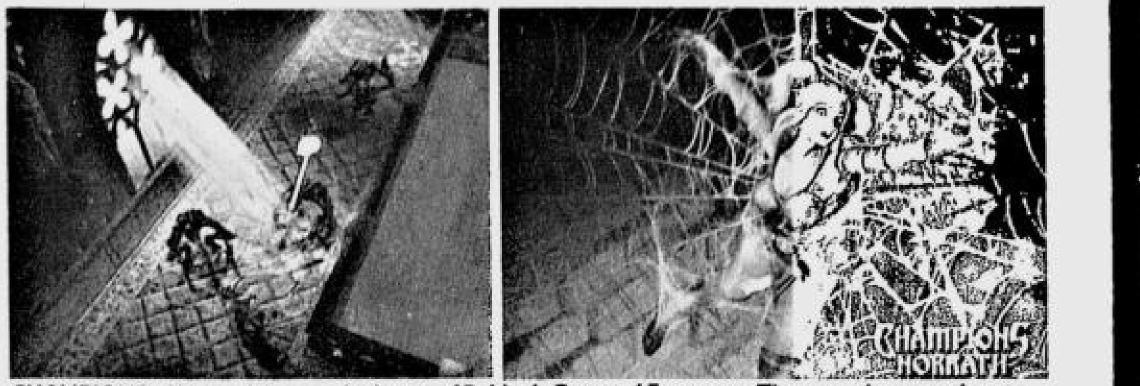
Paul said that while Level-Up! is not seeking damages from the raided Internet café, she warned other private operations from continuing their activities.

The Internet café, however, would be charged with violating Section 33B of Republic Act 8792, also known as the Electronic Commerce Act of 2000.

This specific provision penalizes acts of piracy or unauthorized copying, reproduction, dissemination and distribution of protected works or intellectual property. Penalties range from a minimum fine of P100,000 to a maximum commensurate to the damage incurred by the party plus a mandatory prison term of 6 months to 3 years.

Paul, however, said that Level-Up! is only demanding an apology from the Internet café to "set an example" to other Internet cafés.

"Fraglimits was not the biggest operation but it was a visible one. We did this to scare others from doing it. We didn't want to go to this exercise since we had hoped that our warnings would make them stop. But they didn't listen so there will be more raids—and we're going to do it geographically," Paul said.



CHAMPIONS of Norrath is a good mixture of Baldur's Gate and Everquest. The game, however, is not without flaws especially since it is a meticulously crafted game running on the aging PS2 platform.

Champions of Norrath mixes . . .

From page C1

Gate and Everquest, you'd be comfortable with CoN.

I liked Snowblind's Baldur's Gate, although I felt like it could use some game balance among the races. That's why CoN, also from Snowblind, was very familiar, so imagine how I felt when I played both CoN and Dark Alliance 2 at the same time.

But let's get a minor thing out of the way first before we delve deeper into CoN. I liked the fact that in Interplay's Baldur's Gate 2, your character can jump (useful when cornered), something I wished the characters of CoN could do. Another Interplay game, "Fallout: Brotherhood of Steel," had jumping characters. In fact, Fallout seemed to have used the same Baldur's Gate 2 engine (even the water effects and menu button designs are the same), minus the irritating limitations on how many items you can carry based on weight.

CoN has a few weaknesses, chiefly the straightforward, simplistic premise and the lack of interactivity needed for a better overall feel of your quest. In summary, an army of orcs and goblins are attacking the city of Faydwer. You must defend the city, eliminate the goblin threat and learn more about the monsters attacking elves and humans.

You begin by creating a character, choosing from five different races. I chose to be a high elf cleric instead of a barbarian warrior, a ranger, an erudite wizard or a dark elf shadow knight. You can be male or female and the characters are customizable according to hair type, skin color, etc.

After that you pretty much have to hack and slash your way through dungeons, do some minor quests, fetch some kittens and trinkets here and there till you reach a boss. The bosses, though, require certain strategies to be defeated, and you'll find yourself often using the almost-forgotten "block" button (in this case, R1) to beat a boss.

Unlike CoN, Baldur's Gate's interactivity with townsfolk lends a deeper quest experience. This interactivity would have been enhanced had I played multiplayer (up to four using multitap, also online), but as the only grown-up kid in my block I had no one to play with and my PS2 has no modem, so I had to venture on my quest alone.

WE REVIEW THIS GAME ON THE PS2

CoN has a huge amount of items you pick up from enemies or treasure chests. About 10,000 weapons, armor, potions, etc. can be found. Some weapons or armor can be upgraded using crystals, much like the way you upgrade your light saber in "Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic."

Use of some weapons and armor depend on your level, and CoN features an expanded way of leveling your character up through a myriad of attributes and magic options. However, gameplay can quickly grow tedious, as you have to constantly hack and slash your way through to gain experience points and develop your character. Don't bother going back to a certain map because once you've finished all the goblins, mamothants, spiders, undead and werewolves in an area, most of the time they won't respawn for you to kill them once again to gain more experience (some of them, like lava golems, do respawn in certain areas). And just in case those lava golems do respawn, go drive the lava crawler (the lava version of Halo's Warthog) and run down those hard-to-kill hotheads. And when you do run them down, put the crawler in reverse and run them over again, yeah!

In CoN, the items are worth going back for. Since your stamina and endurance determine how much you can carry, you will have to leave behind some items and weapons you pass along the way. However, selling them to merchants is worth it because, as you gain more gold, it's wise to buy something that catches your fancy in a merchant's inventory right away. This is because the inventory rotates, and that particular item may no longer be there when you go back for it. In this case I invested in a lot of "gate scrolls" (called "recall potions" in Baldur's Gate) so I could teleport back and forth to merchants to sell my loot, lighten my load and go back to the dungeon to pick up even more loot. I appreciate the fact that Interplay did not include this weight-carrying limitation in Fallout, and how I wish they did this, too, in Baldur's Gate. In Fallout, however, you can't teleport back to merchants—dang!

What's best about CoN, however, is the control scheme. Weapons are switched instantly using a tap of the L1 button. Mana is regenerated with a tap of L2, and health is replenished by flicking on R2. R1 is block. A press on R3 (right analog stick) brings up the automap. Best of all, spells are immediately available with a quick touch of the directional pad. It is so simple that developers of other RPG crawlers should be ashamed of themselves for not thinking of this one like Snowblind did. The controls are so easy you'd be slaying spiders and goblins while slashing away with your weapon and interchanging magic, range and melee as if you were a professional magical elf assassin (or something like that). The control layout is perfect for the PS2 dual-shock.

When it comes to spells, however, Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance 2 has better variety, with magic sometimes intrinsic to different classes. The magic spells in CoN are more generic for all classes, except for some like summoning the undead which are done by the dark elf shadow knights.

CoN has good visuals and sound. The level of detail during gameplay is just crazy for this genre. The game has three camera settings: an almost top-down bird's eye view, a closer angle at about 50 degrees, and a zoomed-in view at about 45 degrees. All three are switchable with a flick of the right analog stick, but the close-up view is rather cumbersome since you can't see enemies ahead of you. But it's when you switch to close-up that you see the graphical detail. The characters and surroundings are almost ludicrously detailed when viewed up close. Also, the surface effects on pools of water are stunning. I know you'll see much better graphics in many Xbox and GameCube games, but for a dungeon-crawling RPG on the aging PS2 hardware, CoN is meticulously crafted.

Particle effects are equally good. These show when you cast spells, throw magical weapons, or when blood spews out of enemies' wounds. The blood, by the way, can be toggled on and off in the "Options" menu.

But despite CoN's graphical detail, there are significant flaws like frequent framerate drops and bouts of black out (sometimes you have to move in black, empty space as the PS2 chugs along to render the next background). At times, the game bogs down when light sources such as torches and fire pots are onscreen.

The game's action sequences and menus are complimented by a full orchestral suite. The music is gorgeous and complements the atmosphere nicely. I'm sure to buy a copy of this game's soundtrack, the way I did with the Zelda and Final Fantasy series.

RPG fans who enjoy developing their characters would feel at home with CoN, but the constant dungeon hacking you need to level up may grow old quickly as opposed to enemy battles in free-roaming 3D RPGs. But a good balance of how you distribute points among attributes is key to CoN. You always have just a few points to distribute every time you level up. This means you won't max out a certain attribute easily because you'll always find yourself needing one or two more points in other areas.

All in all, CoN is a good title, but since I was playing Baldur's Gate 2 at the same time (both games were released in February), I couldn't help but see the advantages of one over the other. Baldur's Gate 2 has better story depth and interaction, but character development and controls in CoN are better.

CoN could use some improvement, but credit should be given to Snowblind for creating a good combination of their Baldur's Gate effort and the worlds found in the Everquest mythology.

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The dreams died with them

By Nini Valera
and Romulo Ponte
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

PEREZ, 23.

BEFORE he could finish his graduate studies this month, Isaac A. Munio Jr. was killed in a car crash that also took the life of bold actress Halina Perez in Camarines Sur last Thursday.

Munio, 44, had been managing Halina's career for more than four years, but their relationship went beyond business, according to the manager's older sister Erlinda Portera.

"Until the end, he was with Halina," Portera told INQUIRER Entertainment on Saturday at the wake of her brother in his rented house in San Juan.

"My brother was not supposed to be in that trip, but Halina wanted him to accompany her."

Portera said Halina persuaded Munio to go with her, even if he had exams the following day."

Portera said the actress was scared to go by herself to Camarines Sur, where they were scheduled to open a Konica branch.

She said that her brother was taking up master's studies because he wanted to teach.

That dream, Portera said, died with him.

Orphaned

She said that she had started going through her brother's papers to find out if he had left an insurance policy, which would come in handy in raising a nephew that Munio had taken in.

"That nephew is now an orphan, and my brother was sending him to school," she said. "What do you think should I do?"

So far, Konica has shouldered Munio's funeral expenses. But Portera said that their family would have to pay for the burial.

"We want to know how far Konica would stand by him," she said.

A framed photograph of Halina fell from the top of a television set in the house of the actress' best friend Banjo Carpio.

"Some members of my family and I were awakened from sleep when the frame fell to the floor," Carpio said. "It was 3 a.m. when it fell. We thought it fell because a cat had brushed against it."

The frame did not break, he added.

On the morning of the day Halina had died, Carpio's father heard in the news that the actress was in a car crash.

"He was the one who broke the news to me," he said. "He was also the one who told me that my best friend was dead."

Carpio is shattered. Halina had promised to introduce him to filmmakers who could give him bit roles in the movies she made, he said. He had stopped studying because he had no money. But he had hoped to finish his Hotel and Restaurant Management course with Halina's help.

Halina, Vanessa May-Anne Uri in real life, was 23.

Her death also triggered a family squabble.

Her father Rene Uri, her mother Mildred, and basketball player Anthony Cuevas, have been fighting over her remains.

Cuevas claimed he had married the actress in civil rites 11 days before her death.

Not fair

Uri had insisted on taking Halina's body to his house in Sta. Maria, Laguna where he planned to hold the wake.

"She was born here, she grew up here, she was schooled here, she lived here, and she would stay (here) until her final days," Uri had said.

Halina's mother, estranged from her father, arrived last Thursday from Hong Kong where she works as a domestic helper, had also wanted to bring her daughter's remains to her hometown in Quezon.

Uri arrived early at the Maria Eleazar District Hospital in Tagkawayan, Quezon, and claimed the body of Halina ahead of Mildred and Cuevas.

"It is not fair for someone else to just come out and claim any right to her body," Uri said.

Uri, however, had blamed himself for Halina's death. Uri is an ex-convict who had served time in Muntinlupa.

At about the same time Halina entered show business, Uri was found guilty of illegal possession of firearms.

She was already an up-and-coming actress when Uri was released from prison. By then, he claimed that he could no longer prevent her from pursuing her career.

"It was already too late for me and my family to get in her way," Uri said. "But we continued supporting her and loving her as a daughter."

Uri last saw his daughter when she visited him in their house in Sta. Maria last Sunday. He claimed that Halina had looked unusually sad that day.

"I could feel her sadness, being her father," Uri said.

Uri, who is now the close-in bodyguard of Sta. Maria Vice Mayor Cesar Jumawan, said that the interment of Halina's remains is tentatively set on Tuesday next week.

Uri tried to suppress his emotion when he announced that "everyone is welcome to the wake of my daughter."

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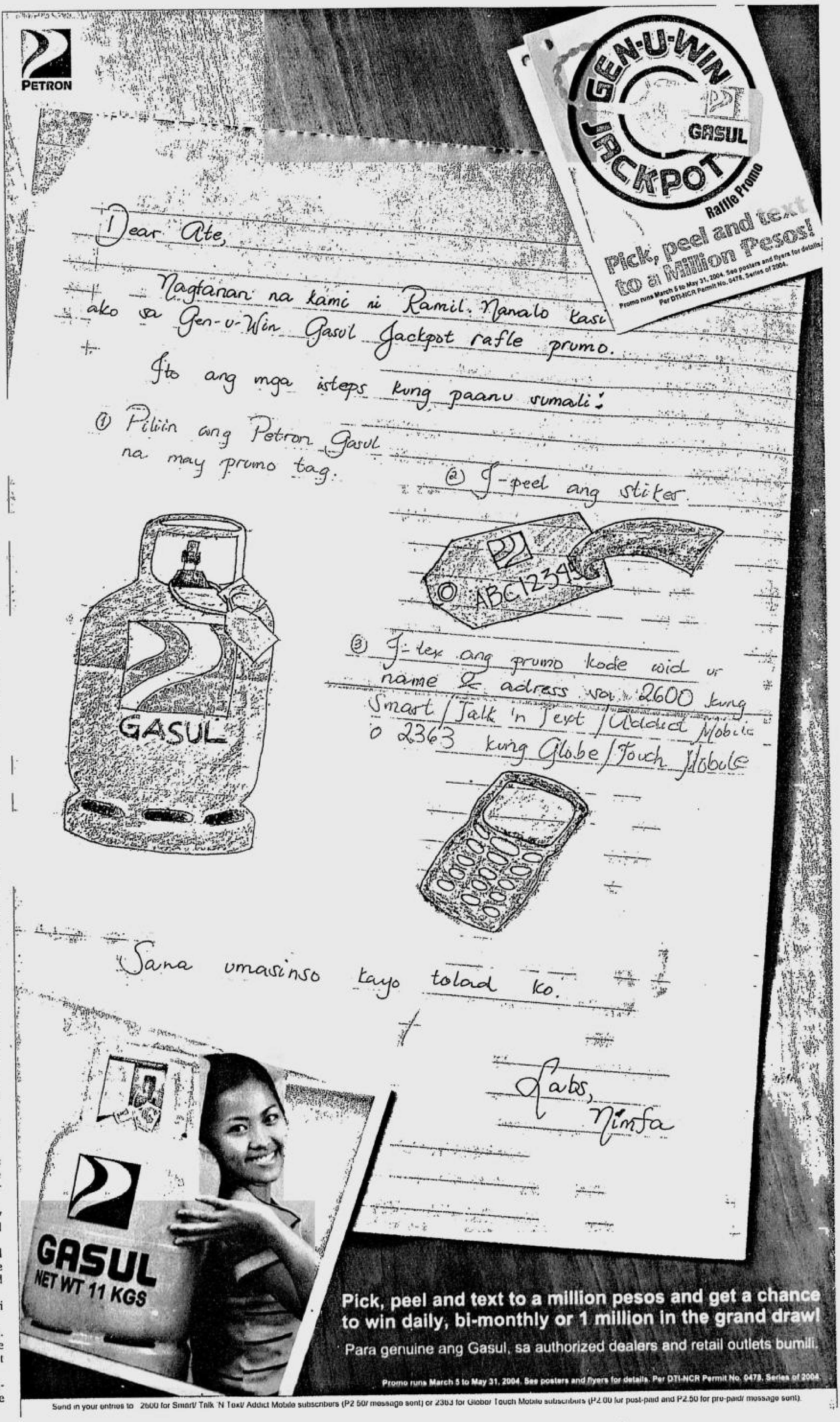


PETRON

GEN-U-WIN GASUL JACKPOT Raffle Promo
Pick, peel and text to a Million Pesos!
Promo runs March 5 to May 31, 2004. See posters and flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0478, Series of 2004.

Dear Ate,

Nagtanan na kami ni Ramil. Nanalo kasi ako sa Gen-u-Win Gasul Jackpot rafle prumo.

Ito ang mga isteps kung paanu sumali:

① Piliin ang Petron Gasul na may prumo tag.

② I-peel ang stiker.

③ I-tex ang prumo kode wid ur name & adress sa 2600 kung Smart / Talk 'n Text / Addict Mobile o 2363 kung Globe / Touch Mobile

Sana umasinso tayo tulad ko.

Labs,
Ninfa

Pick, peel and text to a million pesos and get a chance to win daily, bi-monthly or 1 million in the grand draw!

Para genuine ang Gasul, sa authorized dealers and retail outlets bumili.

Promo runs March 5 to May 31, 2004. See posters and flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0478, Series of 2004.

Send in your entries to 2600 for Smart/ Talk 'N Text/ Addict Mobile subscribers (P2.50/ message sent) or 2363 for Globe/ Touch Mobile subscribers (P2.00 for post-paid and P2.50 for pre-paid/ message sent).

DOLLS for the big boys are Chino's collection, but none of them is Ken.

JEANS from Gas are Chino's favorite.

TIES that bind the man and his dress shirts

All the clothes that fit

OUT OF THE CLOSET

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

ITALIAN suits bought on sale at Linea Italia are where most of Chino's money goes to.

BROADCASTER Chino Trinidad took a while to feel comfortable being INQUIRER TV's anchor person.

Chino read the news in a government-owned television stories, which were "sanitized" before broadcast.

"*Palaban kasi* (In a fighting stance)" is how he describes the attitude that prevails in INQUIRER TV every night at 10 p.m. on ABC 5.

"When I first taped for InqTV, I was shocked," Chino tells INQUIRER Entertainment in an interview at his two-story home in Mandaluyong City. "After three years in a government-owned network you become used to news stories that are sanitized.

For three years, Chino hosted the early morning tele-magazine program "Tele-aga Tabloid sa Umaga" on NBN 4 with Bernadette Allyson. He admits that when he became InqTV's anchorperson, he had to change his approach to news reporting.

"I'm now more than just a news reader. I now have a better appreciation of what's happening around me," says Chino. "The work I do for InqTV allows me to appreciate events as they happen. I learn from each episode, may analysis *na kasi*."

InqTV is a 15-minute news-oriented program, which was launched last Feb. 21 in partnership with ABC 5 and Jemah Television, a distributor of foreign movies and TV shows.

Unlike other news programs, InqTV, "the country's only newspaper on air," goes deeper into the news and gives more commentaries and analyses, says Chino.

"Through InqTV, I got to understand the meaning of the 1986 Edsa Revolt and its effect on the lives of Filipinos for the last 18 years," he says. "Other major networks don't tackle things like these in the way InqTV does."

Work for Chino starts at 10 a.m. and usually ends at about 8 p.m. He shoots for InqTV at the INQUIRER office on Chino Roces Avenue in Makati City before going to his PBL office on Mascardo Street, also in Makati City.

Chino the commissioner of the Philippine Basketball League or PBL.

He is also hosting a daily sports segment in Mike Enriquez's radio program, "Saksi sa Dobol B" on dzBB.

He was also a former sportscaster covering the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) for Vintage TV.

The son of veteran INQUIRER sports columnist Recah Trinidad and freelance writer Fe Lacsamana, Chino is married to Babs, an interior designer, with whom he has three kids—Florian, Florence and Floriza.

CROSS-TRAINERS are now within reach of Chino, who used not to have enough money to buy himself a pair.

"I have to bring three different sets of clothes to work," Chino explains. "But the problem is, I don't want to be changing clothes too often in a day."

This is why he buys only outfits that can be worn for all occasions. "Versatility is important," Chino explains. "My clothes have to adapt to my busy schedule. I don't want to look too dressy during a sports event. But I don't want to be underdressed during a formal gathering.

"Most of my money goes to clothes. If you're doing the news, you can't be seen wearing the same thing everyday," he says.

If he had it his way, Chino would rather wear jeans and shirt to work.

Here's what Chino brought out for INQUIRER Entertainment during a recent Out of the Closet visit:

Shirts. "If I would have my way, I would wear polo-shirts. I don't go for the branded ones, but I'm very particular with the logo. I have shirts with the NBA, CNN, ESPN, the Sydney Olympics and the Philippine basketball team logos. But among them, a red one with PBL logo is the most memorable. This is the first shirt I wore when I became the PBL Commissioner."

"The clothes I wear have to be adaptable to my kind of work. When you're on TV almost every day, you can't use one outfit too often. I've discovered that clothes from Tyler reflect my personality. The designs are very versatile. If you wear a Tyler shirt with jeans, decent-looking *pa rin*. What's good about this brand, *gawa ng Pilipino*."

Action figure collection. "I've been collecting them since last year. The Kobe Bryant action figure was the first toy I bought. It was on sale. I got it for $9 during my last trip in New York. The prices of these toys vary depending on the popularity of the player. The concept is similar to that of trading cards'. I got the cheapest for $5. The most expensive, the Allen Iverson toy, is $40. LeBron James is $30. I have 16 of these toys.

"My kids and I love to play with them. Toys are something that I can never outgrow. The three-dimensional ones are better than the others. I don't have vices. This is where most of my money go."

Press identification cards. "For me, the 2000 Sydney Olympics press ID is the most special. Since I became a broadcaster, I've always dreamt of covering the Olympics. But the first NBA ID is also memorable. Why? Because it's every man's dream! To cover an international event, the media company you're working for has to be accredited by the event organizer."

Jeans. "I issued a memorandum prohibiting my constituents from wearing denims to work, but I broke the rule. I like wearing jeans a lot, especially those that are made from soft fabrics. The most expensive pair of jeans that I bought is from Gas. It's worth P5,000. *Ang lambot n'yan!* I'm also very choosy when it comes to the fit. Funny, but when I first wore my Lee hipsters, I kept pulling it up to my waist. I didn't know how to wear hipsters. (laughs)"

Necktie. "I stopped counting at 200. I have all sorts of neckties—from monochromatic to floral, to cartoon characters to Christmas ones.

"I was supposed to be a part of the broadcast pool of the 1996 Olympics. I wasn't able to go because I was tied down by commitments at work. My bosses gave me this necktie as a gift—*pampalubag loob* (consolation). It had all the Olympic colors—yellow, red, blue, black and green."

Suits. "I buy most of my suits in Linea. If you're patient enough, you'll be able to buy good Italian suits for a low price. I got one of mine for P5,000 down from the original price of P14,000.

A DAY in the life of Chino spent in front of the cameras as he delivers the news for TV viewers

"This pinstriped suit is the most memorable for me. All my life, I've not worn a suit to the PBL. But on the day I wore the suit, I tendered my resignation. Now, I'm scared of wearing it again (laughs)."

Shoes. "Most of my shoes are Pinoy-made. I buy a lot of shoes from Carbon. Every pair you buy is a contribution to the economy. That's how I look at it. But I don't just buy them because I want to patronize Filipino products. I like Carbon because of its rubber soles. Buying the right pair of shoes is important because of the nature of my work. I don't want to slip while walking in the basketball court.

"Rubber shoes are my weakness. I wear all of mine. But I'm not very picky. I even wear my cross trainers to play basketball. Cross training shoes are very comfortable and versatile. I own a pair of white cross trainers that is very memorable. It's a reissue of the second cross trainers released in the '80s. When I was younger, I wanted to buy this particular style, but I didn't have money. Now, I still don't have money, but I'm able to ask for the shoes."

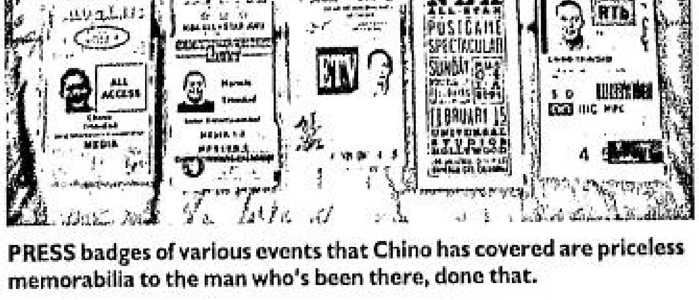
T-SHIRTS with logos of sports clubs and corporate sponsors of sporting events and momentous sports meets like the Olympics are Chino's badges of honor as a sports reporter.

Caps. "Caps are my souvenirs from my trips. Guess where this NBA All Star cap was made? Here in the Philippines. This can easily sell for $100 because this is an All-Star special edition. A Filipino made this, imagine that."

Watches. "I love watches. I buy them because of their color and personality. They also have to be something that I can wear with jeans and at the same time dressy clothes.

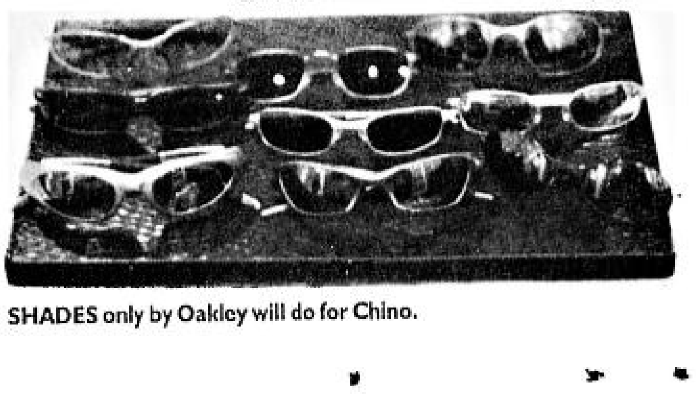
"80 percent of my watch collection is from Timex, which is locally made. I only have one watch from Rolex and Suunto, but I hardly wear them."

Shades. "I only buy Oakley. My first pair of Oakley shades is very special to me because I was wearing them when I figured in an accident in 1996 while covering the Marlboro tour. If I were not wearing the shades, the broken glasses of the windshield would have hit my eyes."



PRESS badges of various events that Chino has covered are priceless memorabilia to the man who's been there, done that.

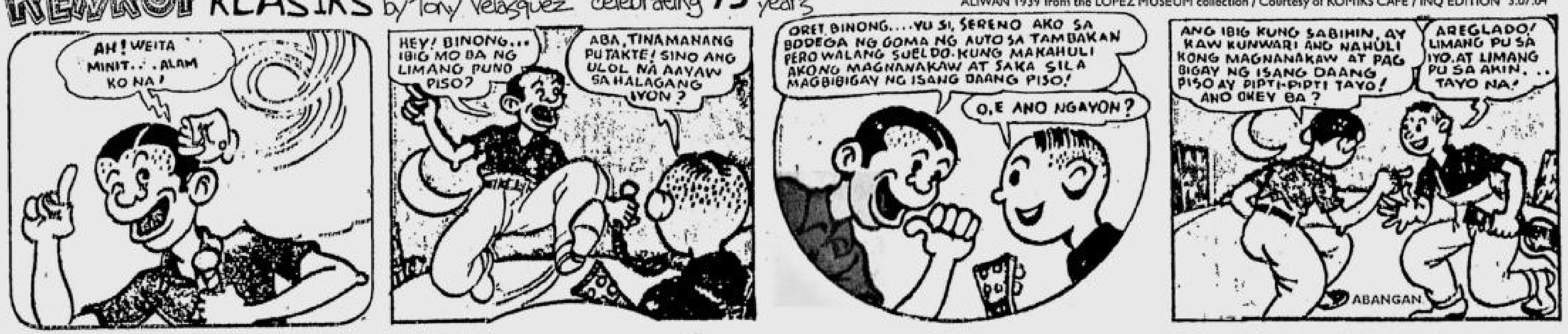
TIMEX pieces that go with casual wear and dressy outfits are Chino's choice in watches.



SHADES only by Oakley will do for Chino.

KENKOY KLASIKS by Tony Velasquez celebrating 75 years

ALIWAN 1939 from the LOPEZ MUSEUM collection / Courtesy of KOMIKS CAFE / INQ EDITION 3.07.04


AH! WEITA MINIT... ALAM KO NA!
HEY! BINONG... IBIG MO BA NG LIMANG PUNO PISO?
ABA, TINAMANANG PUTAKTE! SINO ANG ULOL NA AAYAW SA HALAGANG IYON?
ORET BINONG.... YU SI, SERENO AKO SA BODEGA NG GOMA NG AUTO SA TAMBAKAN PERO WALANG SUELDO. KUNG MAKAHULI AKONG MAGNANAKAW AT SAKA SILA MAGBIBIGAY NG ISANG DAANG PISO!
O, E ANO NGAYON?
ANG IBIG KUNG SABIHIN, AY KAW KUNWARI ANG NAHULI KONG MAGNANAKAW AT PAG BIGAY NG ISANG DAANG PISO AY PIPTI-PIPTI TAYO! ANO OKEY BA?
AREGLADO! LIMANG PU SA IYO, AT LIMANG PU SA AKIN... TAYO NA!
ABANGAN

Bituin Escalante: The 'Chuva' Diva

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

SINGER Bituin Escalante would rather be called "The Reluctant Diva," or even "The Chuva Diva."

Being continuously labeled the next big thing never felt comfortable with the singer-theater actress, who once dropped out of film school and pursued a singing career, and has since been always on the verge of blossoming.

She insists that being "the next someone" just doesn't feel right.

Bituin would also rather accept an Oscar for best original screenplay rather than an award for best performer since she never really saw herself as an artist. She has always seen herself as someone who worked behind the scenes.

Love for singing

But she has excelled in singing since she landed a role in the musical "Rent."

Singer Martin Nievera spotted her talent and talked to her manager, Ricky Gallardo. Before she knew it, Bituin was the crooner's special guest in his "Forever" concert series.

During her recent album launch at the Red Box videoke bar in Makati City, Bituin reveals that she has always loved singing, but that she had difficulty gauging her talent. Her family members, she says, are really good singers.

"Everyone knows how to sing, *eh*," she says. "So I never thought of pursuing singing as a career, until, wow! I'm getting all these breaks. I'm getting so many jobs for something I just like doing."

Despite a prior victory in the 2002 Himig Handog Love Songs Contest as best interpreter for the song "Kung Ako na Lang Sana," and getting various breaks in commercial jingles and television guestings, Bituin constantly feels a tad nervous whenever she performs.

She felt particularly pressured during the album launch, but only because she had to wake up early to attend it and she was not a morning person. But she's used to people expecting good things from her because of her name (which means "star" in Filipino).

The animated and witty singer is proud of her second, self-titled album. She also expresses confidence with the final product and the label that released it: "I signed up with Viva, and I got the producing team Pop Art, because they know how to make radio hits. I want something people can relate to. I want something pop, not something I know. I'm hoping it translates."

The album contains "Kung Ako na Lang Sana," "I'm Sorry" (an entry in April's Mang Levi Celerio Pop Songwriting Contest), and a remake of the Scorpions' "Always Somewhere."

Initially, Bituin was asked to do a cover of another song.

"I cried because I can't sing Bon Jovi's 'Bed of Roses.' They were laughing at me in the studio," she recalls with a smile.

She was then advised to do a cover of a rock song she felt comfortable with, and she opted for "Always Somewhere," which she had given a gospel twist with its soulful back-up vocals: "My brother will finally have a reason to listen to my album. When I sing it, it can't be helped—men will like this because I don't sound like me. I sound like them!"

Gifted artist

Bituin also cites her heroes in the local music scene, a who's who of gifted female artists.

"I really like Kyla and Nina. Idol *ko rin sina* Rhada (of Kulay) and Ella Mae Sayson. I suppose Regine inspired all of us. We cannot argue with that. I fell in love with her when I saw her in Folk Arts Theater when I was 13. She's a fantastic singer. And *si* mama Vernie Varga, she's a joy to work with."

She claims she finds it difficult to write her own songs, mainly because she finds her lyrics too revealing.

Sad and cynical

"When I write, it's so personal. I want details that set it apart from other songs. But it's very personal, I don't wanna share it! Half of my friends will go, 'Oh my goodness.' I will just pass them to others and use a pseudonym," Bituin explains.

Three years in the business have taught her a very important lesson, something that has helped her adapt and survive.

"This is sad. This is cynical. Essentially, you have to be true to yourself... but keep it to yourself. In this business, it's ideal to have a lot of masks, to protect yourself. One can't always be candid or open. You have to know which face to put forward," she says.

But she considers the local music landscape truly encouraging, especially with the presence of equally talented singers.

"If you ask record companies, this whole new acoustic trend, it's not really commercially sound. But they just did it anyway: *Si* Paolo (Santos), *si* Nina, and all these young people. And they're doing well. You don't need to sell your soul or your integrity to create something good. I admire them for that. It's very encouraging."

Having appeared in the plays "Jesus Christ, Superstar," "Rocky Horror Picture Show" and "Rent" has imbedded in Bituin a different attitude in approaching songs and connecting to listeners.

"In theater, you're supposed to have a story to back you up. When you say a line, it means something. The same thing when you sing a song. Most people forget that and just sing, hit the high notes. The pictures or subtext are never in your head. I'd like to think people get that I sing with an understanding of the song's message."

ESCALANTE: 'When I write, it's so personal... I put in details that set it apart from other songs.'

Four out of four

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE OSCARS show last month was a must-see in our book, especially since **Billy Crystal** was hosting it again after a hiatus of some years. So, we cleared our schedule to enable us to be at home from 10 a.m. to late afternoon, to enjoy the annual show biz circle from start to finish.

At 10 a.m., the parade of stars on the red carpet began, and we were happy to see that the interviewers were a younger and savvier bunch than in previous editions. Their "ambush" interviews were shorter and smarter, and didn't get bogged down by bitchiness over stellar fashion victims' perceived excesses and excressenses.

At 10:30 a.m., the awards rites led off with a brilliant montage of Crystal as various iconic movie characters, followed by the host's musical tribute to sundry films and stars.

This is the sort of fearless show stopper that Crystal specializes in, and he was in tip-top form. Even **Robin Williams** was shown paying respectful attention.

As the first few trophies were being handed out, we wondered how our predictions of four top Oscar winners, made months ago, would pan out.

Would it really be **Charlize Theron** for best actress, **Sean Penn** for best actor, **Peter Jackson** for best director, and "The Return of the King" for best picture?

We'd have to wait for the long day's final moments to find out. One thing that almost immediately began to make itself clear, however, was "Return of the King's" good showing at the awards rites. Soon, the film's success exceeded even the most sanguine expectations, as Peter Jackson's movie won one award after another.

This heartened us, but it also made us fret. What if "Return" would win the minor awards and lose out on the big ones? Thankfully, our fears soon abated, as Jackson's movie equaled "Ben-Hur's" old record, and won 11 out of 11.

When the smoke had cleared, our acting bets, Theron and Penn, had also won trophies, so our record as awards psychic stood at: four out of four! Would that we could be as prescient about other matters as well, like the lotto and the results of the May elections!

Truth to tell, however, while our fondest expectations were fulfilled, last Monday's Oscars show turned out to be a tedious affair, with the exception of Crystal's opening number, and occasional wisecracks from **Ben Stiller** and company.

Even **Jim Carrey**'s comic attempts at sounding like **Peter Sellers** bombed. And the Academy head and Crystal got into a verbal brawl that dulled some of Oscar's golden gloss.

Another disappointment was Charlize Theron's bland albeit weepy acceptance speech. And other awardees' litanies of names they simply *had* to thank were a pain in the posterior.

Happily, **Sofia Coppola** had her eloquent moment of glory, and for once, Papa **Francis** didn't mind playing second fiddle to his accomplished writer-director offspring.

On hindsight, the reason why the Oscars show didn't peak to a satisfying, let alone exciting, level was the fact that "Return of the King" had turned out to be such a runaway winner.

But it looked like the film's embarrassment of riches couldn't really be stopped, because what was being honored was just "Return," but all of the three "Lord of the Rings" installments in one fell swoop.

It was Hollywood's way of belatedly apologizing for snubbing the first two films, so the Oscars show ended up not as a general tribute to Hollywood but as a celebration of the "LOTR" movies' collective impact on the present—and future—of filmmaking itself.

New series

STAR World unveils two new series this month: "Wild Card" (9 p.m. Tuesday) stars **Joely Fisher** as a former Las Vegas blackjack dealer who adopts her late sister's children and starts a new career as an insurance investigator.

"Enterprise," premiering on Sunday, March 7 at 9 p.m., is about interstellar adventures in the 22nd century. Capt. Jonathan Archer (**Scott Bakula**) and his crew explore the galaxy on Earth's first deep-space vessel, the Enterprise NX-01.

'Duda/Doubt'

CRIS Pablo's "Duda/Doubt," the first local digital movie to be shown commercially, is being screened again on the SM theater circuit. Schedule:

SM Southmall, Las Piñas, ongoing until March 9; SM Fairview, March 10 to 16; SM Manila, March 17 to 23, and SM Centerpoint, Sta. Mesa, March 24 to 30.

The film is being projected on the EPSON EMP8300. Support this indie production, why don't you?

AGUSTIN: Three shows on the air

Marvin reinvents himself for a reality show on ABS

SHOW STOPPER

MARVIN Agustin is off to a good start in 2004.

After enjoying fame as a teen heartthrob and later making a name for himself as an actor and comedian, Marvin has recently reinvented himself when he began hosting a new reality TV show, "To the Max," which airs Mondays to Saturdays on ABS-CBN.

Marvin is thanking ABS-CBN for giving him a new show where he can sink his teeth into.

He hosts "To the Max" with Rica Peralejo. The first episode, "Boom si Yaya," was a search for a nanny for Kris Aquino.

"We created something new in the afternoon programming slot," Marvin said. "We were able to give someone a job to be Kris' *yaya*. It's a lifetime prize, a livelihood. We also gave the first week winner a scholarship in medicine or law, donated by Kris."

The second week was the "Yaya Might Be You" episode, where the winner became part of the cast of the ABS-CBN soap series, "It Might Be You." On the third week, they signed in aspiring comedians for "Sing in the Clowns."

As host of "To the Max," Marvin has received favorable reviews.

ABS-CBN executive president Charo Santos-Concio was even impressed at his renewed hosting confidence.

"(Marvin's) air of confidence is *sakto*," Charo said. "He was able to reinvent himself, both as a host and as a person."

Marvin is seen in two other ABS-CBN programs: "Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas" and "Tanging Ina," an Ai-Ai de las Alas sitcom where he displays his flair for comedy.

Even in film, Marvin is never short of offers. After getting critical acclaim for his performance in the Metro Manila Film Festival entry "Malikmata," Marvin is looking forward to doing another challenging role on the big screen.

Fans who wish to know more about Marvin can send him messages through Star Text. Just type Startext Marvin, send it to 326 and expect a personal answer from the 24-year-old bachelor.

"I personally attend to all my text messages," Marvin said. "I always see to it that I text back everybody so they will not be disappointed."

Marvin will celebrate his 8th anniversary in show biz with a grand fans' day in April or May.

"I've been blessed in more ways than one," according to Marvin. "I won't make it this far if not for the fans who continue to support me. I want to be able to give back something to them and also make them happy."

Salute! the concert lives on

THE CHARM and legacy of Salute! the concert lives on.

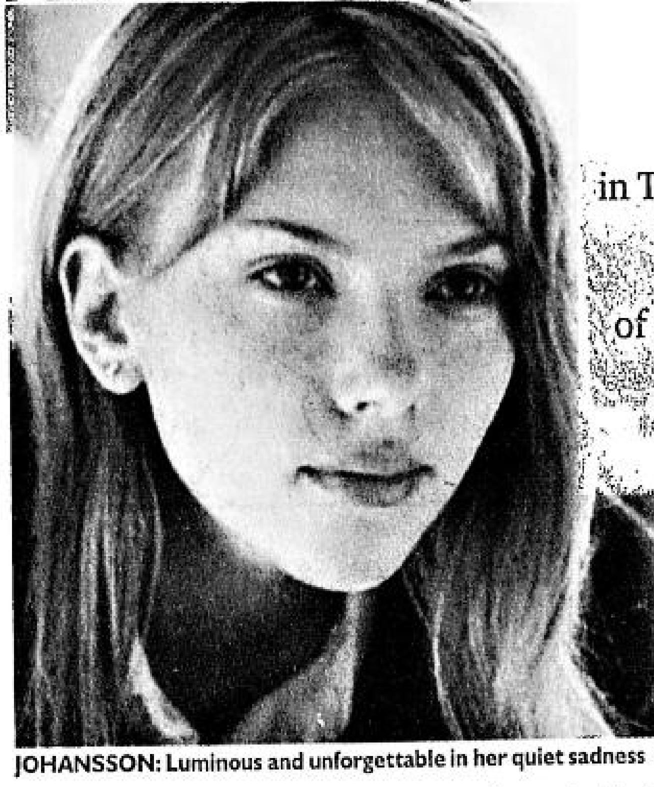
After getting government officials involved in a series of concert-for-a-cause projects last year, Salute! organizers won over professional artists to take up the task of staging a musical show this summer for the benefit of small fishermen in Navotas.

Salute! to the Fisherfolk by the Stars, will feature Rico J. Puno, Vernie Varga, Richard Villanueva and George Sison-Tagle, with the special participation of Ms Ara Mina and the Rated R Band.

Proceeds will go to the Pamamalakaya Foundation, Inc., which will establish livelihood projects for small Navotas fishermen and their families.

The show will be held at the Manila Hotel's Fiesta Pavilion on March 21 at 7 p.m.

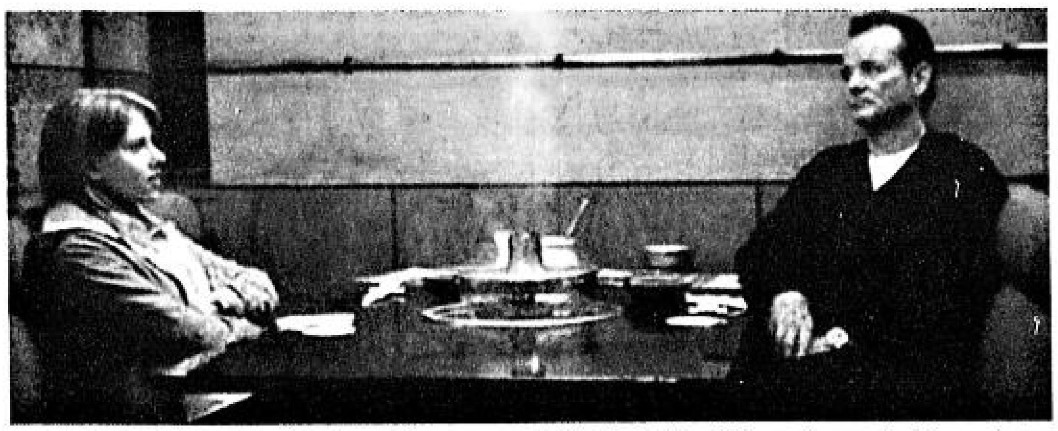
GMA STARS IN TRADE SHOW
As a way of thanking advertisers for their relentless support, the GMA Network recently gathered members of the advertising industry in one big trade presentation. During the event, Network executives took the time out to announce that they have beaten the competition for the No. 1 slot in the past two months. Above, the cast of Te Amo, Iza Calzado and Jomari Yllana, share equal billing with (from left to right) Amy Angel, Bel de Guzman and Kriz Perez of McCann Erickson.



JOHANSSON: Luminous and unforgettable in her quiet sadness

Auteur Sofia Coppola comes of age in 'Lost in Translation,' a beguiling, poignant tale of alienation and affection

No translation needed



JOHANSSON and Murray in search of themselves

COPPOLA: The real star of the show

By Ruel S. De Vera

"*DRAMA pala ito* (I didn't know this was a drama)," a moviegoer blurted out during the first half of "Lost in Translation." He could be forgiven for the assumption, considering that the movie starred rubber-boned Bill Murray. But to consider "Lost" to be only a comedy would sap the film of much of its true potency.

The second feature film by writer/director Sofia Coppola after 1999's "The Virgin Suicides," the movie begins with the arrival of aging American movie star Bob Harris (Murray) in Tokyo to film a whiskey commercial for $2 million. Bob, already in the midst of an unhappy marriage and a declining career, is immediately assaulted by the culture clash, engulfed by the endless politeness of the Japanese, as well as the lights of Tokyo. At the hotel, he bumps into Charlotte (Scarlett Johansson), a pregnant Yale grad who is in the city with her photographer husband John (Giovanni Ribisi). Plagued by questions about her direction in life and often left alone by her husband, Charlotte takes to wandering about Japan, exploring the country's secrets. Both afflicted with jet lag, Bob and Charlotte make their way through the megalopolis, searching for themselves.

Bizarre and benign

As they sample the bizarre and the benign in what's around them, Bob and Charlotte tenderly discover affection for each other, lost souls clinging to each other in the middle of a techno-glitz purgatory. But Bob leaves at the end of the week, coincidentally the same time that John returns from a shoot. What will happen to the two protagonists, doomed to lose each other almost as soon as they find each other?

That poignancy is what makes "Lost" a remarkable movie, complemented by the unstoppable laughter that is triggered by the endless fog of confusion that Bob finds himself in. In one particular scene, when Bob brings Charlotte to the hospital for a stubbed toe, the resulting miscues are so funny, one fails to figure out if the scene was staged or spontaneous.

World-weary wisecracks

Murray, long known for his pratfalls and presence, channels more of the deadpan observer he played in 2001's "The Royal Tenenbaums." Now visibly thinner, his jowls sagging and his expression endlessly tired, he almost seems to be someone else playing Bill Murray. But with his world-weary wisecracks and deliberate agony, Murray essays the best dramatic performance of his life, almost haunting in his resignation. Johansson, who left impressions in 1998's "The Horse Whisperer" and 2000's "Ghost World," is luminous and unforgettable in her quiet sadness. Padding about the movie's edges with a winsome sense of despair and a fleeting smile, she provides a great counterpoint to the experienced optimism of Bob. The two have impressive, irresistible chemistry. Ribisi hardly appears in the movie, though Anna Farris ("Scary Movie") makes the best of a small part as a dimbulb actress making action movies in Asia.

Rapid-fire exchanges

But the real star of "Lost" is the excellent direction and the poetic script by Coppola. Coppola's script is subtle and affecting, mixing long but heartbreaking silences with rapid-fire exchanges of quips and confessions. She shoots the movie with an ever shifting yet perfectly maintained balance of verite and focus, lending "Lost" the feel of a tourist's lonely journey through a wonderland. But by mixing the wide-eyed awe of Japan's traditions and values with the loud and garish strolls through its excesses, Coppola also brings to the fore the same combination of joy and sadness that permeates the bond between Bob and Charlotte.

As "Lost" walks to its conclusion, it becomes clear that Coppola's real achievement here is the captivity of the heartrending emotion in the movie. She weaves Bob and Charlotte around a city that should amaze them, but instead they agonize over what isn't being said. It's a tour through missed opportunities and ephemeral happiness. "Lost" is an American-made sukiyaki pot where the water is constantly simmering but never, ever boils over. It's beautiful in its bareness, an exercise in emotional and cultural insomnia.

Deserving

In many ways, the movie is an acquired taste. "Lost" challenges popular notions on comedy, instead staging its central drama in secret, pausing to let the ambient sounds leak in and tell the story instead. It's a cerebral, quiet ride of resignation—and a celebration of everyday destiny. It also deserves every single nomination and award it will get as Sofia Coppola lets everyone know—quietly but forcefully—that, with "Lost in Translation," this younger Coppola is a cinematic force to reckon with on her own, something that needs no translation after this waking dream of a movie.

Pioneer Films' "Lost in Translation" is currently showing in Metro Manila theaters.

Kailan kasalanan ang magmahal?

Si Adrian, binabalak mag-pari.
Will he break his best friend's heart or break his sacred vow?

Si Angela, lihim na minamahal si Adrian.
Is her heart's only prayer the heaviest cross she'll ever bear?

Si Louie, matagal nang pinapangarap ang pag-ibig ni Angela.
Is his life's heaven his only hell?

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1	DRAGON VS. NINJA
2	ANNIE B
3	MILAN
4	COLD MOUNTAIN
5	SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
6	GOTHIKA
7	DUPLEX
8	TORQUE

SM CITY CEBU 2313876

1	THE SPY
2	COLD MOUNTAIN
3	HAUNTED MANSION
4	CHASING LIBERTY
5	ANNIE B
6	21 GRAMS
7	MILAN
8	RUNAWAY JURY

SM CITY BACOOR 4173868

1	DRAGON VS. NINJA
2	DUPLEX
3	TORQUE
4	MILAN
5	GOTHIKA
6	ANNIE B
7	KUYA
8	U-BELT

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO (088) 8592884

1	COLD MOUNTAIN
2	CHASING LIBERTY
3	ANNIE B
4	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT 8204975

1	MILAN
2	GOTHIKA
3	TORQUE
4	ANNIE B.

SM BICUTAN 7763055

1	TORQUE
2	ANNIE B
3	MILAN
4	GOTHIKA

SM CITY BAGUIO (074) 4464505

1	RUNAWAY JURY
2	THE GATHERING
3	DIABLO
4	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

SM STA. MESA 7148522 • 7161416

1	MILAN
2	COLD MOUNTAIN
3	GOTHIKA
4	SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
5	TORQUE
6	DRAGON VS. NINJA
7	ANNIE B.
8	BONE SNATCHER
9	DUPLEX
10	WATER DEMON

SM SOUTHMALL 8066888

1	NIGHTMARE
2	DUPLEX
3	GOTHIKA
4	SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
5	DUDA/DOUBT
6	KUYA
7	ANNIE B
8	TORQUE
9	MILAN
10	DRAGON VS. NINJA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	HAUNTED MANSION
2	DRAGON VS. NINJA
3	DUPLEX
4	TORQUE
5	BONE SNATCHER
6	MILAN
7	GOTHIKA
8	ANNIE B.
9	COLD MOUNTAIN
10	KUYA
11	U-BELT
12	SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

SM CITY MARILAO

1	SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
2	ANNIE B.
3	KUYA
4	COLD MOUNTAIN

SM CITY ILOILO 3209422

1	U-BELT
2	RESERVED
3	HAUNTED MANSION
4	WRONG TURN
5	CHASING LIBERTY
6	COLD MOUNTAIN
7	RESERVED
8	MILAN

SM MEGAMALL 6331001

1	LOST IN TRANSLATION RESERVE-A-SEAT dial 6366900
2	SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
3	TORQUE
4	GOTHIKA
5	DUPLEX
6	BONE SNATCHER
7	NIGHTMARE
8	MILAN
9	ANNIE B
10	COLD MOUNTAIN
11	DRAGON VS. NINJA
12	RING: THE SPIRAL

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN 2514302

1	TORQUE
2	GOTHIKA
3	MILAN
4	ANNIE B

SM CITY MANILA 5230240

1	GOTHIKA
2	SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
3	COLD MOUNTAIN
4	TORQUE
5	DUPLEX
6	BONE SNATCHER
7	DRAGON VS. NINJA
8	KUYA
9	MILAN
10	NIGHTMARE
11	RING: THE SPIRAL
12	ANNIE B

SM CITY DAVAO 2978598

1	RUNAWAY JURY
2	21 GRAMS
3	MILAN
4	HAUNTED MANSION
5	IN THE CUT
6	HAUNTED OFFICE

SM CITY PAMPANGA 7128015

1	GOTHIKA
2	RUNAWAY JURY
3	KUYA
4	MILAN
5	LOST IN TRANSLATION
6	ANNIE B

SM CITY LUCENA (042) 7108977-80

1	DUPLEX
2	IN THE CUT
3	MILAN
4	THE GATHERING

—THE—
PODIUM
CINEMA

1	TORQUE 11:30FS/ 11:35 MF /1:45/3:35/5:25/ 10:30 LFS / 11:00 LMF/12:25 END
2	GOTHIKA 11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/ 8:50/10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END

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	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1	ANNIE B.	TORQUE	ArtFilm GOTHIKA 12:10 2:30 4:50 7:10 9:30	THX GUARANTEED SEATS SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE	THX GOTHIKA
2	TORQUE	DUPLEX	SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE 1:40 4:20 7:00 9:40	THX GUARANTEED SEATS GOTHIKA 12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00 11:15	DUPLEX
3	MILAN	THX GUARANTEED SEATS SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE	REPERTORY'S DRACULA Mar. 19, 20, 21, 26, 27 & 28	GUARANTEED SEATS LOST IN TRANSLATION 1:50 4:00 6:10 8:20 10:30	TORQUE
4	GOTHIKA	THE BONE SNATCHER		GUARANTEED SEATS DUPLEX 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30 11:30	ANNIE B
5		RUNAWAY JURY		GUARANTEED SEATS TORQUE 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30	SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE
6		GOTHIKA			
7		MYSTIC RIVER			

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Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA (Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DTS)	MILAN
2 (SDDS)	HAUNTED MANSION
3 (DTS)	TORQUE
4 GOLD (DTS)	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	COLD MOUNTAIN
6 GOLD (SDDS)	GOTHIKA
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	DUPLEX
8	ANNIE B
9	NIGHTMARE
10	DRAGON VS NINJA

EASTWOOD CINEMAS (Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE
2 (DOLBY)	TORQUE
3 (DOLBY)	GOTHIKA
4 (DOLBY)	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE

Masagana CINEMA (Pasay) tel 833.3290 . 833.3274

1	ANNIE B
2	U BELT
3	TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

starmall Movies www.clickthecity.com.ph (Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	ANNIE B
	TORQUE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	U BELT
5	

METROPOLIS star www.clickthecity.com.ph (Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	DRAGON VS. NINJA
2	U BELT
3	ANNIE B
4	MILAN
5	GOTHIKA
6	TORQUE

M star www.clickthecity.com.ph (Las Pinas) tel 873.5004

1	GHOST HOUSE
2	TWIN EFFECTS

PREMIERE CINEMA THX (Makati City) tel 892.2503

Centre Plaza Cinema (Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	KUYA
2	HAUNTED MANSION

Sunshine (FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	ANNIE B
2	
3	
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City (Manila) tel 734.8588

5	RESERVE
6	
7 (DTS)	
8 (SDDS)	
9 (DOLBY)	

Gotesco Grand Central (Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	U BELT
2	ANNIE B
3	MILAN
4	DRAGON VS. NINJA
5	KUYA
6 (DOLBY)	TORQUE
7 (DTS)	GOTHIKA
8	WATER DEMON
9	GHOST HOUSE

Gotesco Commonwealth tel 951.0083

1	RESERVE
2 (SDDS)	
3 (DTS)	
4 (DOLBY)	
5	

Gotesco Ortigas tel 656.6795

1	MILAN
2	ANNIE B
3 (DTS)	WATER DEMON
4	U BELT
5	

Universal (Manila) tel 733.2470

1	RESERVE

Dilson (Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson
Lords

PARKETHALE Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	ANNIE B
2	TORQUE
3	GOTHIKA
4	DRAGON VS. NINJA

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	TORQUE
2	NIGHTMARE
3	GOTHIKA
4	ANNIE B
5	U BELT

Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	U BELT
2	MILAN

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta Center
ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7 Tel No. 911-3101

1	CLOSED
2	CLOSED
3	ANNIE B
4 (SDDS)	GOTHICA
5 (DTS)	TORQUE
6	DRAGON VS NINJA
7	WATER DEMON

Jade Cinema (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1	RUN AWAY JURY
2	ANNIE B
3	GOTHIKA
4	WHISING STAIRS

Cine Nepo (Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1	KUYA
2	ANNIE B
3 (DOLBY)	GOTHIKA
4	RUN AWAY JURY

Cine Nepo (Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8409

1	ANNIE B
2	KUYA
3 (DOLBY)	HAUNTED MANSION
4	CHASING LIBERTY

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall (Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1	WATER DEMON
2	GOTHIKA
3 (DTS)	ANNIE B

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	WATER DEMON
2 (DTS)	ANNIE B
3 (DOLBY)	GOTHIKA
4	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	ANNIE B
2 (DOLBY)	GOTHIKA
3 (DTS)	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
4	WATER DEMON

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	KUYA
2	CHASING LIBERTY
3 (DOLBY)	HAUNTED MANSION

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	ANNIE B
2	CHASING LIBERTY
3 (DOLBY)	KUYA
4 (DTS)	WISHING STAIRS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320

1	ANNIE B
2	HAUNTED MANSION
3	RUN AWAY JURY

Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	WATER DEMON
2	PALIGAYAHIN MO AKO
3	U BELT
4 (DTS)	GHOST HOUSE

Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (SDDS)	GOTHIKA
2	ANNIE B
3 (DTS)	WATER DEMON
4	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
5	GHOST HOUSE

Olivarez Tri-Cinema (Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	ANNIE B
2	GHOST HOUSE

Olivarez Los Baños tel (049) 249.2558

1	GOTHIKA
2	ANNIE B
3	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE

Mega Center Mall (Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	U BELT
2	KUYA
3 (DTS)	CHASING LIBERTY
4 (DOLBY)	ANNIE B

Cabuyao (Laguna City) tel 520.8914

1 (DTS)	RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	U BELT
2	SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
3	COLD MOUNTAIN
4	ANNIE B

Emperor (Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	ANNIE B
2	U BELT

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Te 85035-71 to 72.
Schedule subject to change without prior notice

julia roberts
mona lisa smile

NOW SHOWING

Incubus concert: Safe, no hassle

EVERYTHING'S all set for the biggest rock concert of the year—"Incubus Live In Manila"—on March 12 at the CCP Open Grounds.

Event organizers are assuring Incubus fans that the event will be safe and free of all hassles.

The security force has also been beefed up—with at least 500 professional bouncers, especially trained in crowd-control, complementing a unit from the Philippine National Police.

Protective nets

You can count on people-safe barricades set up in each ticket section to avoid overcrowding.

Protective nets will also be placed around the stage and between audience areas.

The entire perimeter will also be fully lighted for heightened safety.

Eight first-aid stations and eight highly-visible security outposts will be set up. Four fire trucks and an ambulance will also be on standby.

There will be three main entrances: Two on Jalandoni Street (for all ticket holders) and one on Sen. Gil Puyat Street (for Premium ticket holders).

General admission

There are special entrances for General Admission. Each entrance will feature five to seven ticket queue to accommodate the flow of viewers.

A strict security check will be conducted upon entry, so please come early. Gates open at 4 p.m.

Professional cameras and video cams, as well as bottles and any sharp objects will not be allowed inside the concert venue. Cellular phones with cams, on the other hand, will be allowed.

Please note that children aged seven and below will not be allowed inside the venue.

Parking

Ample parking will also be provided at Boom na Boom.

This mega-rock event is presented by Smart Buddy, LoneStar Ultra and Jag jeans. It is also brought to you by Petron Blaze, Converse All Star Chuck Taylor, official TV partner ABS-CBN, official music channel MYX, and participating radio stations Magic 89.9 DWTM, 103.5 K-Lite, 99.5 RT, Monster Radio RX 93.1, Joey 92.3, Campus Radio 97.1 DWLS, Blaze 105.9 and NU 107. Call Ticketnet at 911-5555, Ticketworld at 891-9999, or the Jag Jeans Hotline at 817-1158 for your tickets.

BOYD

17th annual Kid's Choice kicks off

SHOW TIME

NICKELODEON and Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdog have kicked off the 17th annual Kid's Choice Awards with a nationwide contest.

The lucky kid, along with a friend and two chaperones, will win an all-expense paid trip to Los Angeles, USA, to watch the Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards.

The winner will also get round-trip airline tickets, hotel accommodations, the chance to tour the Nickelodeon Animation Studios in Universal Studios, and US$600 in spending money.

To join, kids 15 years old and under, would only have to answer the question: "Who won Favorite Cartoon in the 2003 Kids' Choice Awards."

The contestant must then attach a 500-gram proof of purchase of Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdog and, on a piece of paper, write down whether the kid is a boy or a girl, the name, telephone number, birthday, postal address, email address and cable operator.

The contestant must then drop off their entry at any participating Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdog stand nationwide.

Entry deadline is on March 15th.

Winners and companions will be responsible in securing valid travel documents for the trip. Winners will also be announced on Nickelodeon and on major broadsheets on March 20.

Purefoods Tender Juicy Hotdog has a two-year sponsorship commitment to Nickelodeon for the Kids' Choice Awards in the Philippines.

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	CLOSED
Ali 2	CLOSED
Ali 3	ANNIE B.
Ali 4	GOTHIKA
Ali 5	TORQUE
Ali 6	DRAGON VS. NINJA
Ali 7	WATER DEMON

NEW FIESTA CARNIVAL

NOW OPEN 4 PM to 10 PM daily

ARANETA COLISEUM

MAR 7	PBA STA LUCIA VS COKE
MAR 10	PBA: REDBULL VS. SHELL
MAR 12	SONG BIRD & SONG WRITER REPEAT
MAR 13	PBA: PUREFOODS VS. STA. LUCIA
MAR 14	PBA: GINEBRA VS. COKE
MAR 16	NCA 7-COCK DEBY
MAR 17	PBA STA LUCIA VS TALK 'N' TEXT

FOR TICKETS, CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SII
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	MAPUSOK / HAPDI
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	ANNIE B
B	
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	KUYA
CINEMA-2	U-BELT
CINEMA-3	SOMETHINGS GOTTA GIVE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	DUPLEX
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	WATER DEMON
CINEMA-6	GHOST HOUSE
CINEMA-7	TUKAAN
CINEMA-8	HAUNTED MANSION
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	TORQUE
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	GOTHIKA
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	COLD MOUNTAIN
CINEMA-12	DRAGON VS NINJA
CINEMA-14	ANNIE B
CINEMA-15	MILAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PIÑAS)	CHASING LIBERTY
CINEMA-1	ANNIE B
CINEMA-2	KUYA
CINEMA-4	WISHING STAIRS
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1 — **GOTHIKA** 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 10:00 **R13**

CINEMA 2 — **SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE** 12:10, 2:55, 5:40, 8:30 **R13**

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

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MUSIC MUSEUM

MAR. 12,13,19,20	"MENOPAUSE THE MUSICAL"	8:00PM
MAR 17 & 18	"WILLIE NEP 4 PRESIDENT"	9:00PM

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

For inquiries, call:
687-6963 • 687-6972

RESERVED SEATING

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 **SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE** 11:03, 2:20, 5:10, 8:00, 10:50 R-13

2 **TORQUE** 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 10:40, 9:50 PG-13

3 **GOTHIKA** 11:15, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30, 10:50 R-13

4 **DUPLEX** 11:45, 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45, 9:45 R-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

LOST IN TRANSLATION PG13 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50	**DUPLEX** PG13 12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00	**TORQUE** PG13 1:25, 3:35, 5:45, 7:55, 10:20
GOTHIKA R13 1:20, 3:40, 6:00, 8:20, 10:30	**MYSTIC RIVER** R13 1:15, 4:00, 6:45, 9:30	**SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE** R13 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

MTRCB ▶ R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE

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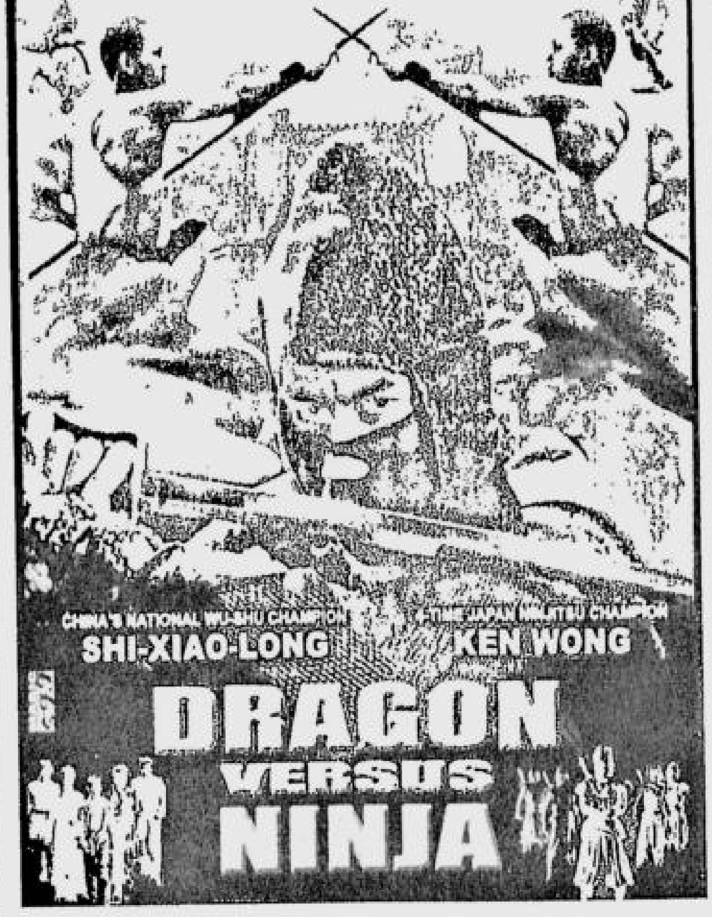
From YUEN WO-PING
the action director of THE MATRIX.

SHAOLIN KUNG FU ORIGINATED IN 3RD CENTURY CHINA. ★ NINJITSU ORIGINATED IN 9TH CENTURY JAPAN.

WHICH TECHNIQUE IS THE BEST?



SM CINEMA

red carpet premiere

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CINEMA 1 THX — **SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE** 10:40, 1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:45

2 **SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE** 11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:45, 10:00

3 **LOST IN TRANSLATION** 11:05, 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30 DTS

4 **DUPLEX** 11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40

5 **TORQUE** 10:50, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:45

6 **GOTHIKA** 10:10, 12:25, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40 SDDS

7 **GAWI: THE NIGHTMARE** 12:05, 2:15, 4:25, 6:40, 9:00

8 **COLD MOUNTAIN** 12:10, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00

9 **MILAN** 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

10 **DRAGON VS. NINJA** 12:30, 2:35, 4:40, 6:50, 9:00

MATINEE: Monday to Friday/ 10 am-4pm except holidays
Matinee Price: P100 THX cinema / P80 for one level cinemas
Regular Price: P130 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA
526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12

DOLBY DIGITAL EX

1 **TORQUE** 11:00, 1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:40

2 **SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE** 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

3 **MILAN** 11:10, 1:50, 4:30, 7:10, 9:50

4 **DRAGON VS. NINJA** 11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50

5 **ANNIE B.** 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50

6 **DUPLEX** 10:20, 12:15, 2:10, 4:05, 6:00, 7:55, 9:50 SDDS

7 **GOTHIKA** 10:10, 12:25, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40 DTS

Big R Supercenter METRO EAST
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1 **DUPLEX** 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00

2 **GOTHIKA** 10:45, 1:20, 3:55, 6:30, 9:05 SDDS

3 **TORQUE** 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00

4 **DRAGON VS. NINJA** 11:25, 2:00, 4:25, 6:50, 9:15

5 **COLD MOUNTAIN** 10:30, 12:15, 3:00, 5:45, 9:00

6 **SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE** 10:20, 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00

7 **MILAN** 10:35, 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 9:00 DTS

8 **ANNIE B.** 10:30, 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW
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1 **TORQUE** 11:25, 1:55, 3:05, 4:55, 6:45, 8:35

2 **DUPLEX** 11:20, 1:10, 3:00, 4:50, 6:40, 8:30

3 **ANNIE B.** 11:45, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:30

4 **COLD MOUNTAIN** 11:55, 2:40, 5:25, 8:30

5 **DRAGON VS. NINJA** 11:45, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:30

6 **GOTHIKA** 11:45, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:30

7 **SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE** 11:15, 1:35, 3:55, 6:15, 8:35

8 **GAWI: THE NIGHTMARE** 11:40, 1:45, 3:50, 5:55, 8:10

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1 TORQUE
2 DRAGON VS. NINJA
3 ANNIE B.
4 GOTHIKA

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1 TORQUE
2 MILAN
3 ANNIE B.
4 GOTHIKA

Big R Supercenter STA. ROSA
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1 MILAN
2 GOTHIKA
3 ANNIE B.
4 SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
5 GHOST HOUSE

Big R Supercenter LIPA
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1 COLD MOUNTAIN
2 ANNIE B.
3 U-BELT
4 MILAN
5 SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

Big R Supercenter DASMARIÑAS
852-2125

1 U-BELT
2 GHOST HOUSE
3 SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
4 MILAN
5 ANNIE B.

Big R Supercenter STARMILLS
San Fernando, Pampanga
675-1927 / 961-5270

1 DUPLEX
2 MILAN
3 LOST IN TRANSLATION
4 ANNIE B.
5 GOTHIKA
6 RUNAWAY JURY

IMUS
471-8188 / 875-5858

1 TORQUE
2 DRAGON VS. NINJA
3 ANNIE B.
4 GOTHIKA
5 MILAN
6 WATER DEMON

BACOLOD
441-0458/59

1 COLD MOUNTAIN
2 HAUNTED MANSION
3 IN THE CUT
4 CHASING LIBERTY
5 DUPLEX
6 MILAN

ILOILO
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1 HAUNTED MANSION
2 CHASING LIBERTY
3 COLD MOUNTAIN
4 WRONG TURN
5 U-BELT
6 MAGIC KITCHEN

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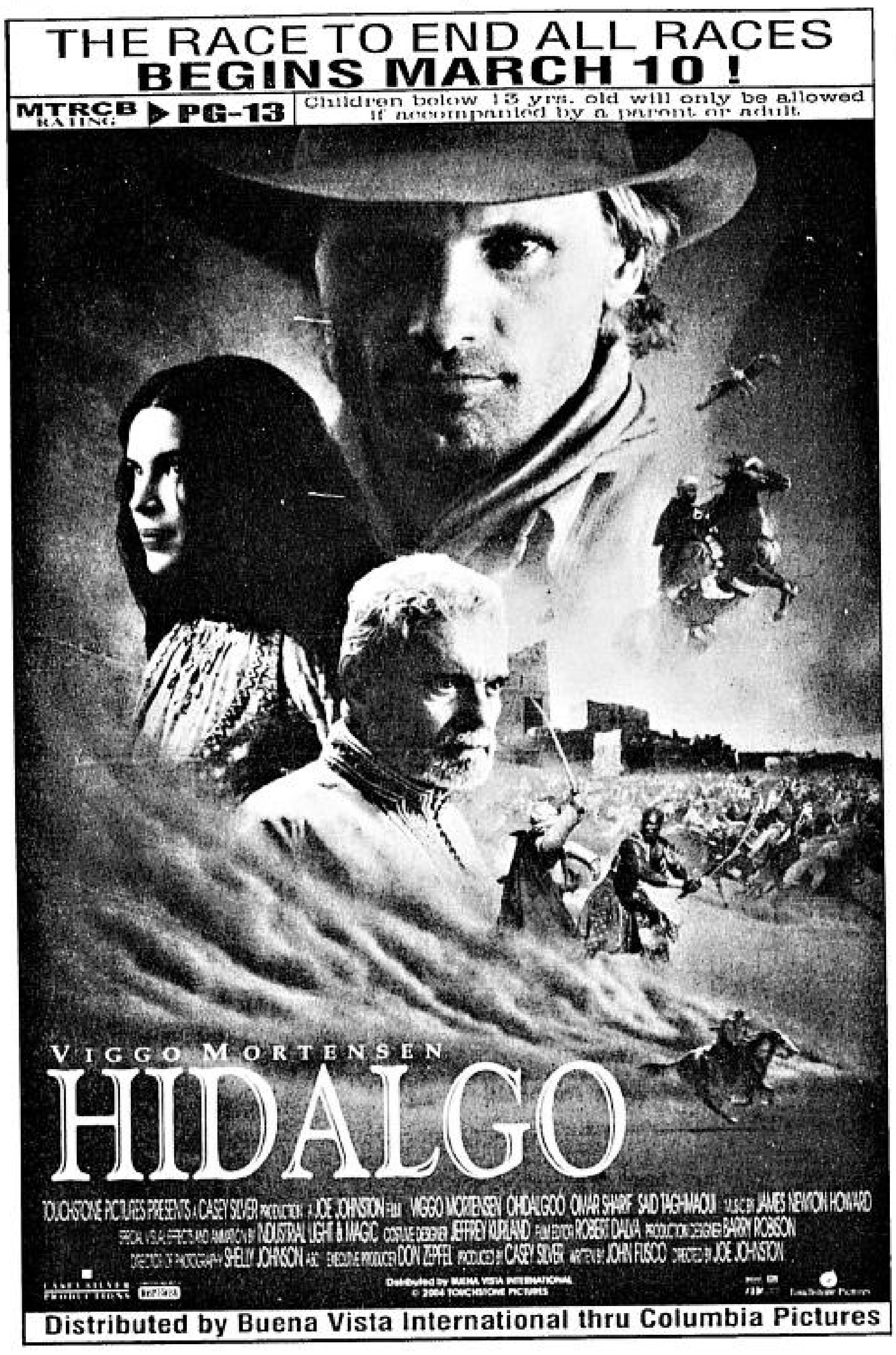
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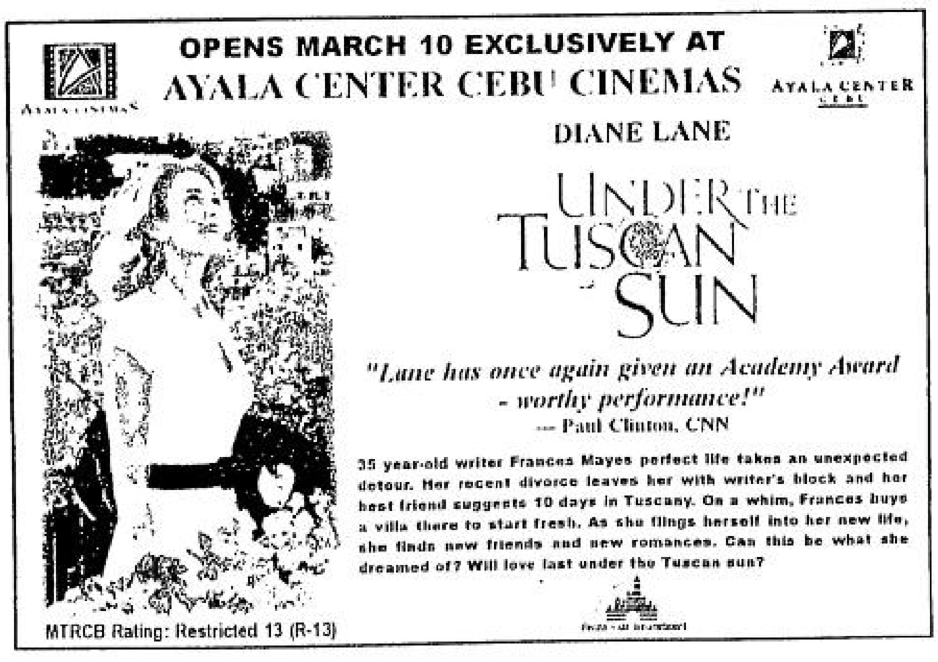
OPENS MARCH 17 EXCLUSIVELY AT
GLORIETTA 4 CINEMAS
AYALA CINEMAS
COLUMBIA PICTURES
Tommy Lee Jones Cate Blanchett
THE MISSING
How far would you go, how much would you sacrifice to get back what you have lost?
From Ron Howard and Brian Grazer, the Oscar-winning director-producer team of A BEAUTIFUL MIND comes THE MISSING, an action-filled suspense thriller and a powerful drama of love, forgiveness and redemption.
"Powerful and provocative, The Missing is another masterful production from one of the industry's best directors and two of its best actors."
-- Paul Clinton, CNN
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)


OPENS MARCH 10 EXCLUSIVELY AT
AYALA CENTER CEBU CINEMAS
AYALA CINEMAS
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DIANE LANE
UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN
"Lane has once again given an Academy Award - worthy performance!"
— Paul Clinton, CNN
35 year-old writer Frances Mayes perfect life takes an unexpected detour. Her recent divorce leaves her with writer's block and her best friend suggests 10 days in Tuscany. On a whim, Frances buys a villa there to start fresh. As she flings herself into her new life, she finds new friends and new romances. Can this be what she dreamed of? Will love last under the Tuscan sun?
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 13 (R-13)

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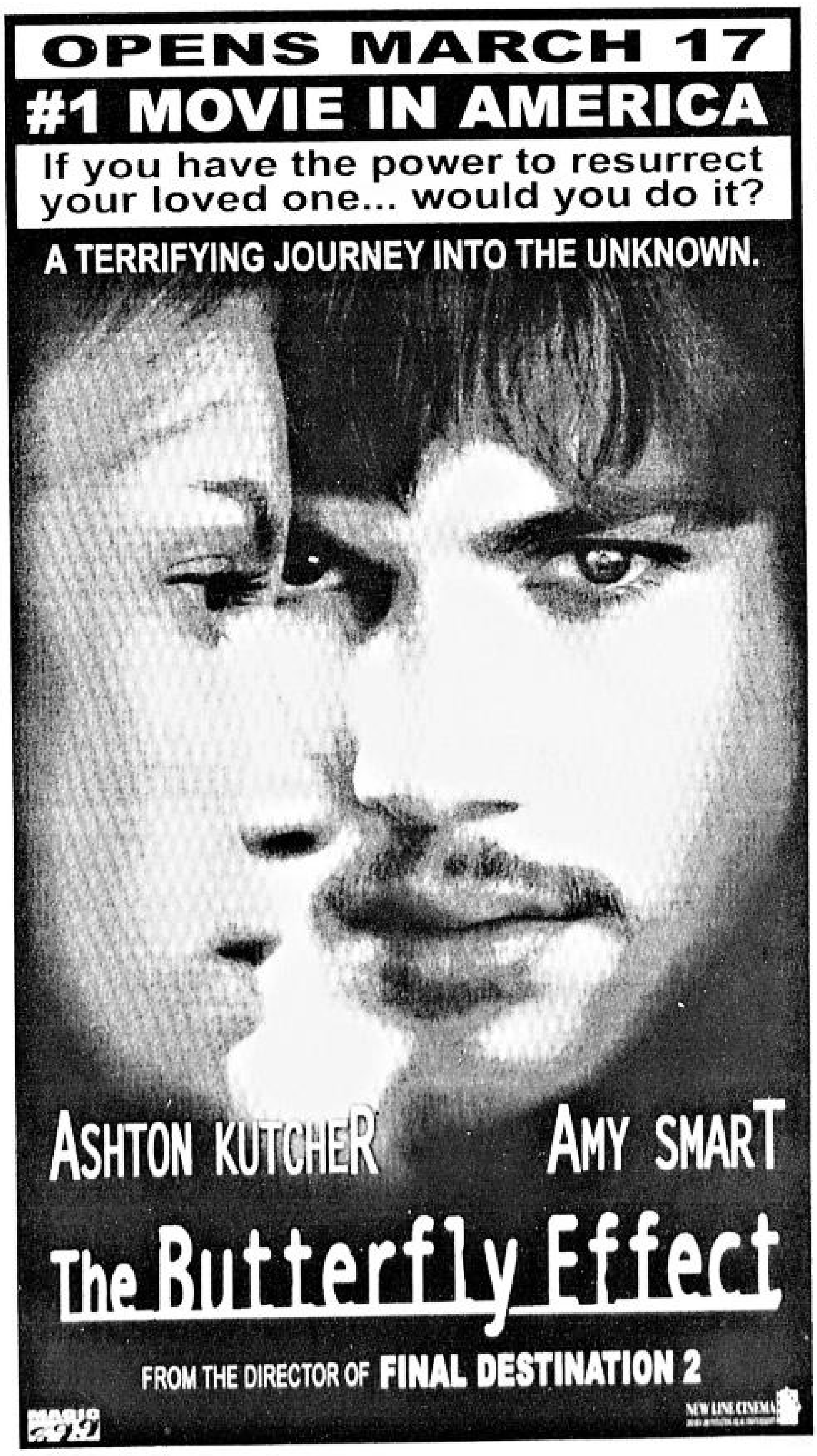
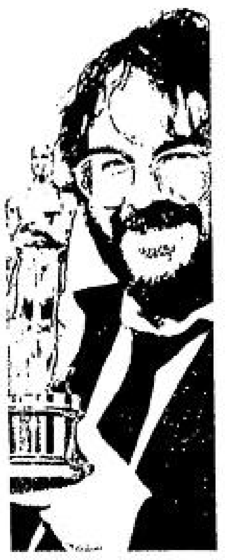
AYALA CINEMAS. BEYOND MOVIES
MTRCB Rating: General Patronage

MTRCB RATING ▶ R-18 Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. old may be admitted
OPENS MARCH 10
A film that will make you laugh.
A film that will make you cry.
A film that will remind you that "LOVE IS ALL AROUND."
Somewhere in this movie, you'll find the love of your life.
From the Makers of Notting Hill
THE ULTIMATE ROMANTIC COMEDY
love actually
Very romantic. Very comedy.


OPENS MARCH 17
#1 MOVIE IN AMERICA
If you have the power to resurrect your loved one... would you do it?
A TERRIFYING JOURNEY INTO THE UNKNOWN.
ASHTON KUTCHER AMY SMART
The Butterfly Effect
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF FINAL DESTINATION 2
MAGIC 89.9
NEW LINE CINEMA


JACKSON

Legal battle hobbles Jackson's 'Hobbit'

NEW YORK—Peter Jackson won't be returning to the Shire any time soon.

The Oscar-winning director is planning to film "The Hobbit," the prequel to "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy by J.R.R. Tolkien. But two studios must first fight over legal rights to the film.

Jackson said New Line Cinema has the rights to make the movie, but MGM has the rights to distribute it.

Bilbo's story

"I guess MGM's lawyers and New Line's lawyers are going to have a huge amount of fun over the next few years trying to work it all out," he told reporters recently in Los Angeles.

"I'm obviously busy for a couple of years on 'King Kong' so those lawyers can just go at it for a long time."

"The Hobbit" tells the story of Bilbo Baggins, who found the ring and eventually passes it on to his nephew, Frodo Baggins. Frodo's journey to Mount Doom to destroy the ring is the basis for the "Rings" books and films.

Academy award

Jackson said if he were going to direct the movie, he'd want it to feel like the rest of the trilogy.

On Sunday, Jackson won an Academy Award for best director.

He also shared the adapted-screenplay award with his two co-writers for the final "Rings" film, "The Return of the King."

Same myth

"I'd want Ian McKellen to be back as Gandalf, I'd want it to feel like it was part of the same mythology that we've done with 'Lord of the Rings,'" Jackson said.

"The Return of the King" swept this year's Academy Awards, winning all 11 categories in which it was nominated.

Jackson is in the middle of remaking "King Kong," starring Naomi Watts, due out next year. AP

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE

A night of Asian chorale passion /E3

For feedback, text us at (0919)880-33-54
or email us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**
Subsection Editor **Lito Zulueta**

Artists speak up, politicians spell out

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

HEY, treat us with respect. Treat us as equals. We are also involved in national development. We are two million-strong. We are not just entertainers. We are a force to reckon with. In the smithy of our souls, we are forging the uncreated conscience of the race (the latter with apologies to James Joyce).

These were among the battle cries and exhortations floated by artists from different sectors during the recent Arts Congress, christened Kilos Kultura para sa Kinabukasan. It was convened by the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) in coordination with the Film Development Council of the Philippines, and held at the Tanghalang Francisco Balagtas (Folk Arts Theater).

Presidential candidates were invited to present their platforms for art and culture.

Former senator Raul Roco and evangelist Eddie Villanueva spoke. President Macapagal-Arroyo was a no-show. Actress Susan Roces was expected, but only sent a message to be read. She was at Plaza Miranda. (It was the day the Supreme Court was hearing the disqualification case against her husband Fernando Poe Jr.)

As expected, Roco, always an effective public speaker, had the most impact upon the throng. Artists of the Philippines should be respected, Roco said, because—like the works of Michelangelo—"they can be remembered forever and a day."

Artists also have a long memory, the former education secretary opined. He cited the Michelangelo paintings he had seen in the Sistine Chapel as a student. The mayor of Rome had given the great Florentine artist a hard time and so, according to Roco, Michelangelo made this mayor the model for one of his demons in the painting.

SENATE aspirant Boots Anson Roa calls for "values" amid globalization.

PRESIDENTIAL candidate Eddie Villanueva calls for moral regeneration.

PRESIDENTIAL timber Raul Roco envisions "a creative people under God."

ARTISTS Laurice Guillen, Isay Alvarez and Robert Seña make their final pitch for culture and the arts.

The standard-bearer of Alyansa ng Pag-asa said his vision and that of his political party is "a creative people and a self-reliant nation united under God." And creativity should be enhanced through traditional and modern art. "Help us accomplish that dream under a Roco administration," he added.

Frustrated poet

A frustrated poet and wide reader, the former senator cited the works of Rizal and Balagtas, observing that "it was the artists, the poets, who gave us a sense of nationalism. Only the artist can give beauty to the nation."

It was Roco who drafted the last will and testament of the late National Artist Cesar Legaspi, and as a reward he received a "trophy painting" in different shades of green. And he had asked Legaspi: "*Ka* Cesar, how can you paint like that when you are color-blind?"

And the artist, according to Roco, replied "you must find the colors in you."

The presidential candidate concluded: "The government must enhance the colors of the Filipino, and only then will the Philippines grow."

Villanueva recalled that he was once a radical activist facing arrest by the State. Instead he was "arrested" by the Lord Jesus. He indicated that the main problem of the country was "endemic, widespread corruption" and cited a US investment house report that in the Philippines, $248 billion has been wasted due to corruption.

"*Kaya walang pera para sa sining at kultura* (and that's why there is no money for art and culture)," he said.

If elected, the standard-bearer of Bangon Pilipinas said his administration will give the arts full support ("No. 1 *susuportahan*"). The arts will be "a tool for national development, a *pangunahing* (first) army for national transformation, and there will be outreach projects all the way to the barangay."

Actress Boots Anson Roa, a senatorial candidate, sounded a different call when she called attention to the "concerns, anxiety" not just in the country but in the world: "With globalization, values have been waylaid in search of the almighty US dollar."

And so she called for a return to our roots: "*Balikan ang ating ugat*—the family, the immediate family as well as the family of cultural workers."

Comedienne Mitch Valdez declared that "artists are citizens too and should be treated as such. We have proven our cause to governance. Name any campaign, and there's an artist there. From the next administration we expect a Magna Carta for the welfare of the Filipino artist. We are tired of hearing about a Filipino artist dying a pauper when there are people becoming rich on his works."

Hello out there on the campaign trail! Are you politicians listening?

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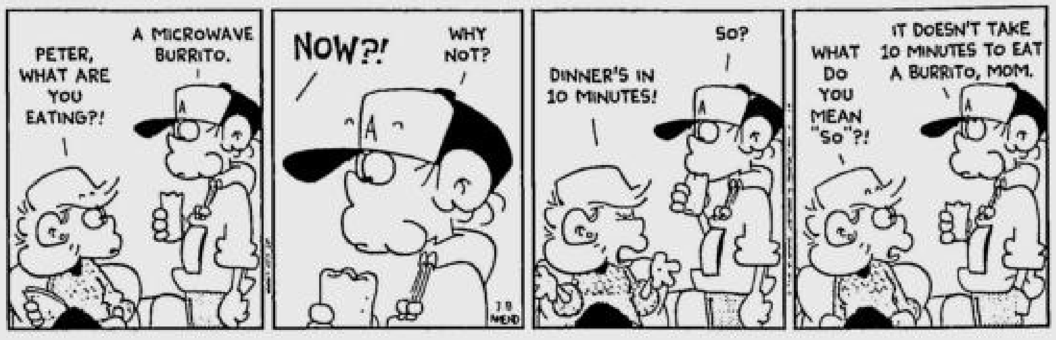
MONDAY, MARCH 8, 2004

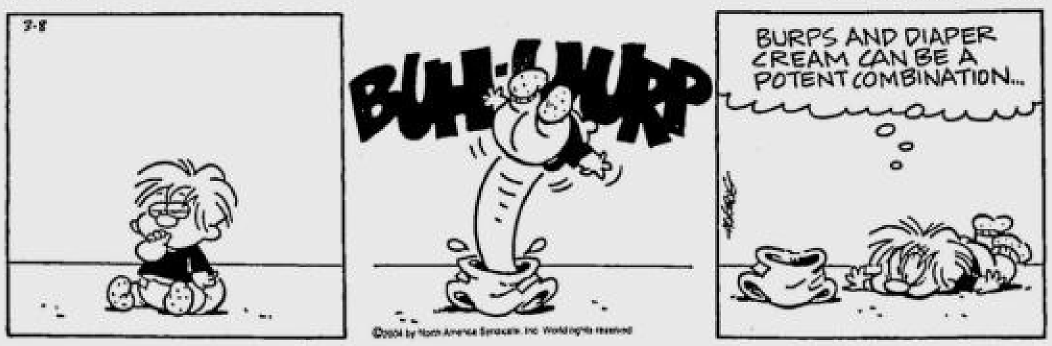
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


PETER, WHAT ARE YOU EATING?!
A MICROWAVE BURRITO.
NOW?!
WHY NOT?
DINNER'S IN 10 MINUTES!
SO?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "SO"?!
IT DOESN'T TAKE 10 MINUTES TO EAT A BURRITO, MOM.
AMEND

MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


3-8
BUH-URRP
BURPS AND DIAPER CREAM CAN BE A POTENT COMBINATION...

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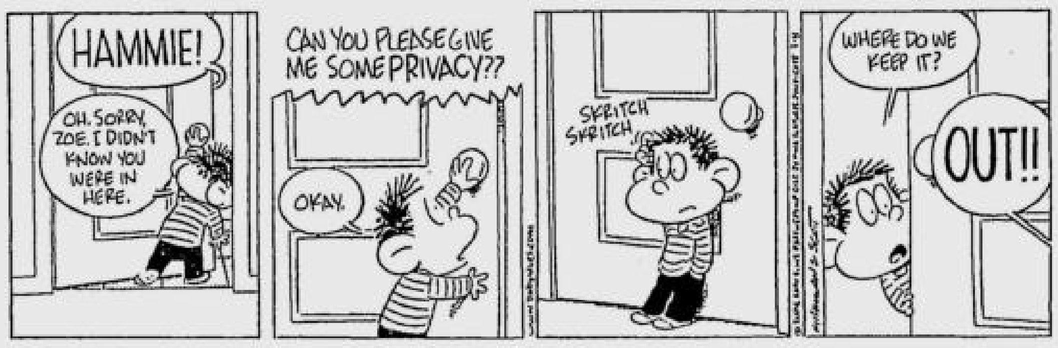
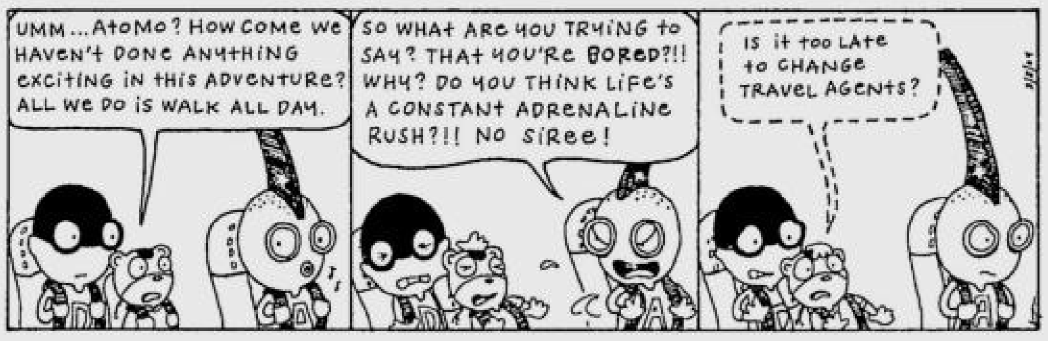
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


HAMMIE!
OH, SORRY, ZOE. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE IN HERE.
CAN YOU PLEASE GIVE ME SOME PRIVACY??
OKAY.
SKRITCH SKRITCH
WHERE DO WE KEEP IT?
OUT!!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


UMM... ATOMO? HOW COME WE HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING EXCITING IN THIS ADVENTURE? ALL WE DO IS WALK ALL DAY.
SO WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY? THAT YOU'RE BORED?!! WHY? DO YOU THINK LIFE'S A CONSTANT ADRENALINE RUSH?!! NO SIREE!
IS IT TOO LATE TO CHANGE TRAVEL AGENTS?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are highly individualistic. You see the world through your own eyes, and you work with it in an unorthodox way. You have tremendous zest for life, and enjoy the company of others. Nevertheless, you will always march to the beat of your own drum. The year ahead might be one of the best years of your life. Expect a miracle.
Birthdate of: Lynn Redgrave, actress; James Van Der Beek, actor; Camryn Manheim, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Avoid arguments about political or religious subjects. Stop trying to convince others to agree with you. They are trying to do the same thing! It's a standoff.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Don't argue with a friend about shared possessions today. You might not only lose a possession, you'll lose your friend as well! Chill out.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): This is a terrible day to try to tell VIPs, bosses and authority figures how to do things. People are looking for a fight today. Just sit on the sidelines.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Don't try to improve people or make them over. Just because you think you know what's best for others, doesn't mean they want to hear it. People resent unsolicited advice.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Everybody is up in arms today! People disagree very easily. That's why you have to be patient with children and young people. Don't throw your weight around.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Because you're obsessed with an idea today, you want everyone to agree with you or at least listen. Lighten up! You cannot force your views on others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You might want to coerce somebody through statements or guilt trips today. It's not that you want to do it, it's as if you can't resist it! Refrain from dishing out advice.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Expect a clash of wills with lovers, romantic interests, people in show business, children and anything having to do with professional sports. This is a bad day to make your case. Play it low-key.

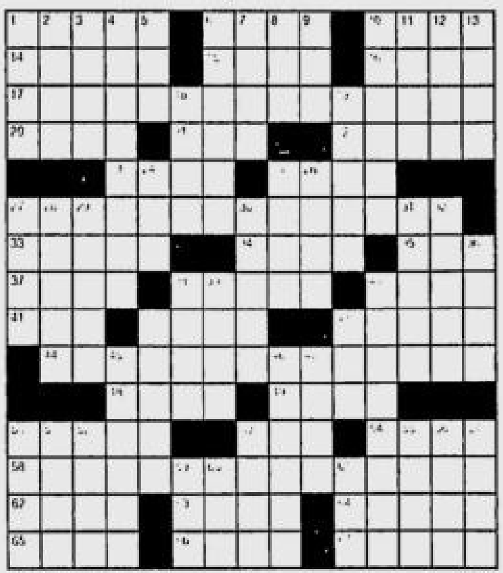
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Domestic disputes are rampant today. Patience is your only answer. Instead of trying to improve others, turn this energy inward to yourself.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Ego conflicts and power struggles erupt very easily today. That's because people speak without thinking now. Reactions are simply conditioned responses. To stay out of trouble—count to three before you speak.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might be obsessed about buying something today. You would be wise not to. This is a temporary, emotional fixation. Save your money.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might encounter somebody who tries to tell you what to think today. You don't have to listen. Be polite, but just walk away.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
3/8/04

ACROSS
1 Texas A&M student
6 Hollow tooth
10 Big pile
14 Contaminate
15 Choir part
16 Agatha contemporary
17 TV twosome
20 Fuel from bogs
21 RR stop
22 Show host
23 Tiny quantity
25 Jai __
27 TV twosome
33 Please mightily
34 Outer edges
35 Commit perjury
37 Hereditary unit
38 David of "Just Shoot Me"
40 Dove or Moreno
41 Silly Caesar
42 PC junk mail
43 Chicago team
44 TV twosome
48 Hard and fast rules
49 Liberal __
50 Org. of songwriters
53 Vent opener?
54 Ride thermals
58 TV twosome
62 Strike an attitude
63 Potent start?
64 Band leader Shaw
65 Hightailed it
66 Information
67 Rock full of crystals

DOWN
1 At the peak of
2 Peer
3 Sphinx location
4 Start
5 Antibes summer
6 Gambling card game
7 "M*A*S*H" star
8 Utmost degree
9 Tibetan gazelle
10 Religious recluse
11 __ the Red
12 Out of the wind
13 Fountain of Dixieland
18 Dog in "The Thin Man"
19 Stands on hind legs
24 Single
25 Surrounded by
26 Type of duck?
27 Laws, briefly
28 Derived from oil
29 Shields film, "__ Nevada"
30 Composition for the stage
31 Of a pelvic bone
32 British saltpeter
36 No sweat
38 Disgorge
39 Treats
40 Give confidence
42 Breaks suddenly
43 Three-letter sandwich
45 Stared fixedly
46 C.S. Lewis location
47 The __ Scott Case
50 Little snakes
51 Halt
52 Detective's concern
53 Huff and puff
55 Bologna eight
56 Corrosive substance
57 Korean leader Syngman
59 Down for the count, briefly
60 Singer Sumac
61 Crone

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

M	O	I	E	T	Y	■	S	K	I	R	T	I	N	G
A	N	N	L	E	E	■	N	A	T	I	O	N	A	L
N	E	V	A	D	A	■	I	N	S	O	M	N	I	A
A	B	E	T	S	■	A	P	E	■	■	B	A	L	D
S	Y	N	E	■	H	I	P	■	M	O	S	T	E	L
S	O	T	■	S	O	R	E	■	A	R	T	E	R	Y
A	N	O	I	N	T	E	D	■	H	B	O	■	■	■
S	E	R	M	O	N	S	■	C	O	I	N	E	R	S
■	■	■	P	O	E	■	M	A	N	T	E	L	E	T
S	M	O	L	T	S	■	O	R	E	S	■	E	A	R
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T	O	O	T	S	I	E	S	■	P	O	R	O	U	S
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P	E	E	R	L	E	S	S	■	S	A	S	S	E	S

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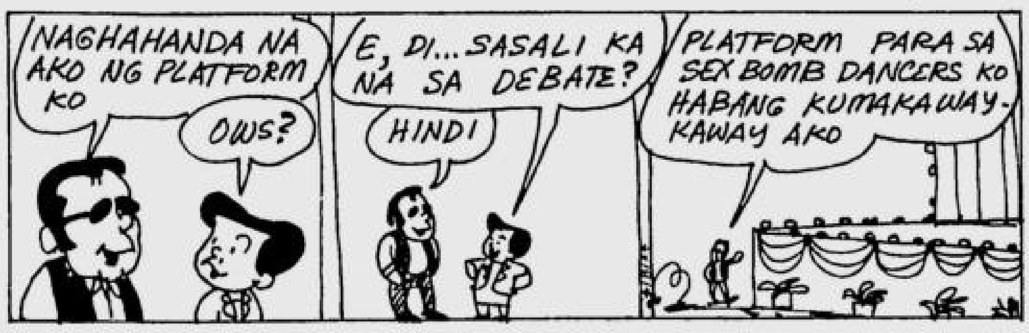
3/8/04

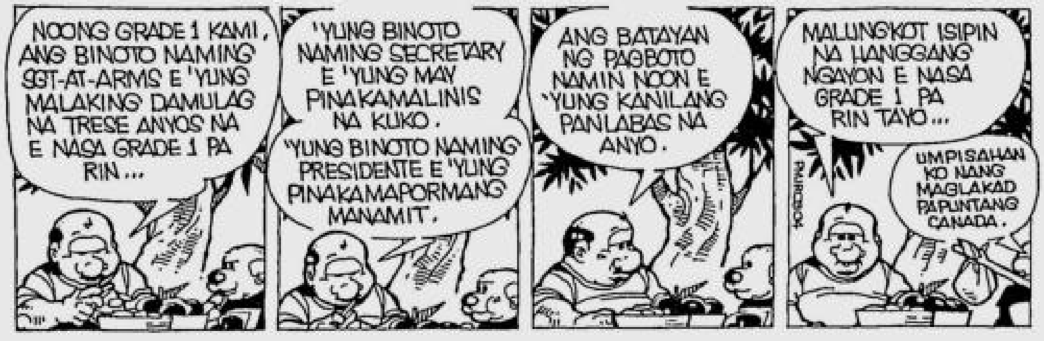
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


NAGHAHANDA NA AKO NG PLATFORM KO
OWS?
E, DI... SASALI KA NA SA DEBATE?
HINDI
PLATFORM PARA SA SEX BOMB DANCERS KO HABANG KUMAKAWAY-KAWAY AKO

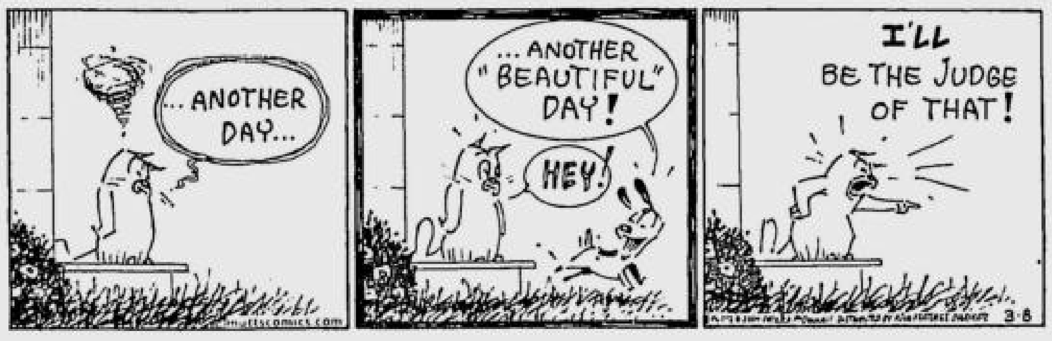
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NOONG GRADE 1 KAMI, ANG BINOTO NAMING SGT-AT-ARMS E 'YUNG MALAKING DAMULAG NA TRESE ANYOS NA E NASA GRADE 1 PA RIN...
'YUNG BINOTO NAMING SECRETARY E 'YUNG MAY PINAKAMALINIS NA KUKO.
'YUNG BINOTO NAMING PRESIDENTE E 'YUNG PINAKAMAPORMANG MANAMIT.
ANG BATAYAN NG PAGBOTO NAMIN NOON E 'YUNG KANILANG PANLABAS NA ANYO.
MALUNGKOT ISIPIN NA HANGGANG NGAYON E NASA GRADE 1 PA RIN TAYO...
UMPISAHAN KO NANG MAGLAKAD PAPUNTANG CANADA.

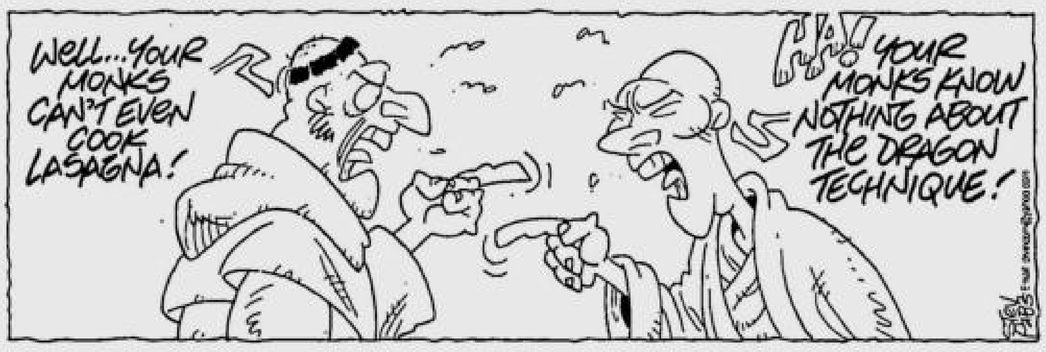
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


...ANOTHER DAY...
...ANOTHER "BEAUTIFUL" DAY!
HEY!
I'LL BE THE JUDGE OF THAT!
muttscomics.com
3-8

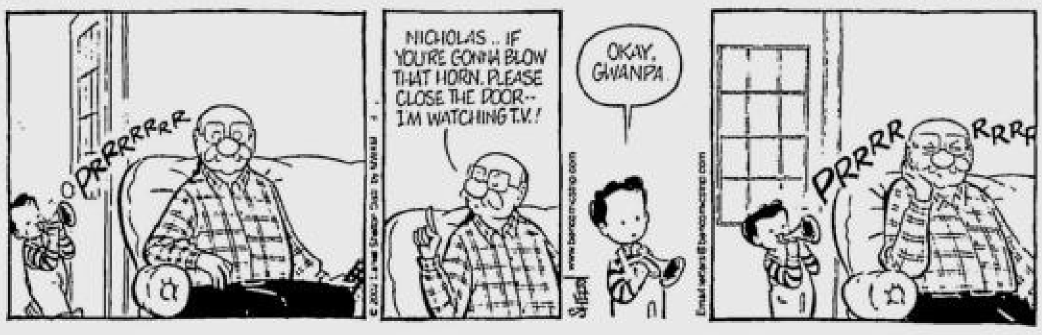
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


WELL...YOUR MONKS CAN'T EVEN COOK LASAGNA!
HA! YOUR MONKS KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THE DRAGON TECHNIQUE!

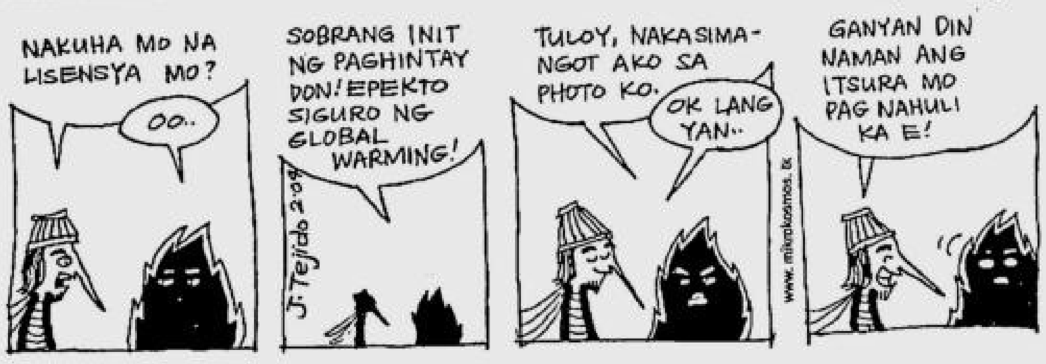
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


PRRRRRRR
NICHOLAS .. IF YOU'RE GONNA BLOW THAT HORN, PLEASE CLOSE THE DOOR-- I'M WATCHING T.V.!
OKAY, GWANPA.
PRRRR RRRR

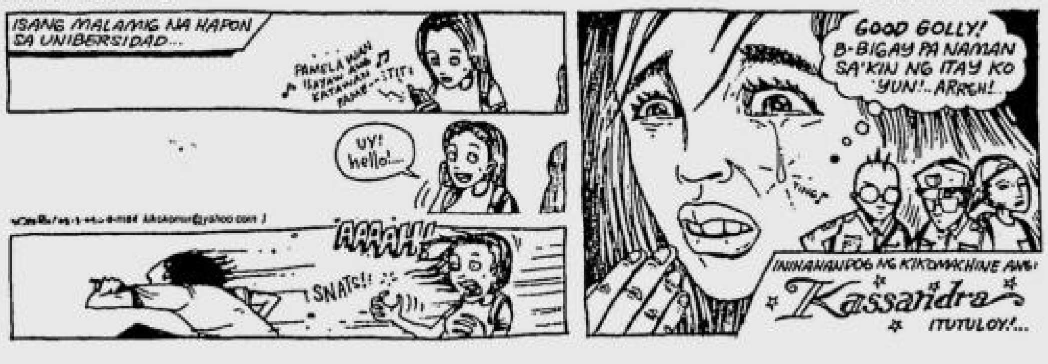
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKUHA MO NA LISENSYA MO?
OO..
SOBRANG INIT NG PAGHINTAY DON! EPEKTO SIGURO NG GLOBAL WARMING!
J. Tejido
TULOY, NAKASIMANGOT AKO SA PHOTO KO.
OK LANG YAN..
www.mikrokosmos.tk
GANYAN DIN NAMAN ANG ITSURA MO PAG NAHULI KA E!

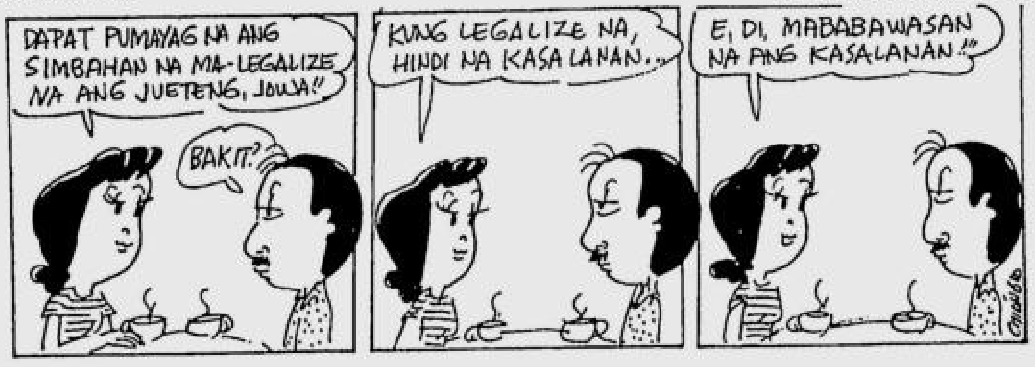
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ISANG MALAMIG NA HAPON SA UNIBERSIDAD...
UY! hello!..
AAAAH!
SNATS!!
TING!
GOOD GOLLY! B-BIGAY PA NAMAN SA'KIN NG ITAY KO 'YUN!.. ARRGH!
INIHAHANDOG NG KIKOMACHINE ANG:
Kassandra
ITUTULOY!...

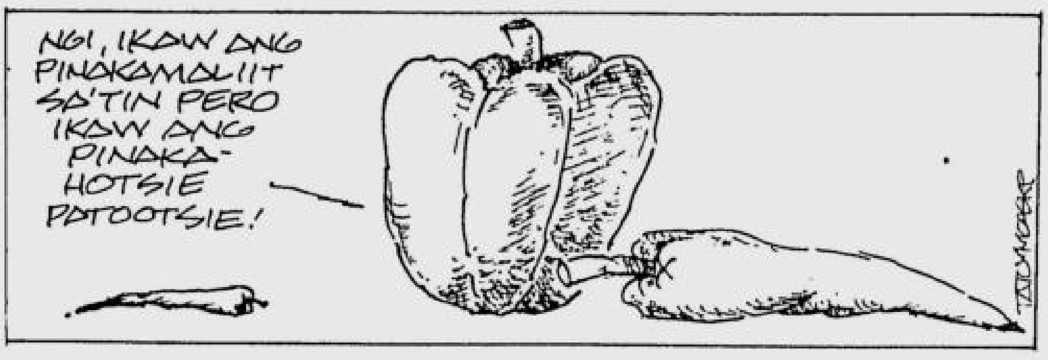
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DAPAT PUMAYAG NA ANG SIMBAHAN NA MA-LEGALIZE NA ANG JUETENG, JOWA!
BAKIT?
KUNG LEGALIZE NA, HINDI NA KASALANAN..
E, DI, MABABAWASAN NA ANG KASALANAN!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NGI, IKAW ANG PINAKAMALIIT SA'TIN PERO IKAW ANG PINAKA-HOTSIE PATOOTSIE!
TATUMCAR

A night of Asian chorale passion

By Jasmine W. Payo

CONDUCTOR Eudenice Palaruan RUDY ESPERAS

THE SAN Miguel Master Chorale will perform Asian pieces in a capella and accompanied voices, with the special participation of the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra.

ALTHOUGH a lot of prolific artists admit that their musical journey began in the church choir, not too many musicians continue their passion for sacred music like conductor Eudenice Palaruan.

"There is no money in music," Palaruan says. "To be a musician is already bad, but to be a church musician is even worse! And I'm a church musician."

As a senior lecturer in the conducting department of the UP College of Music and choirmaster of the Asian Ensemble, Palaruan has not abandoned the unpopular path altogether. Concurrently, he is the music director of the Greenhills Christian Fellowship and a faculty member of the Asian Institute for Liturgy and Music.

Thus, when the San Miguel Foundation for the Performing Arts (SMFPA) decided to open its 2004 Special Concert Series with a show featuring Asian sacred music, it was no surprise that Palaruan was chosen as guest conductor for the one-night concert.

"He was top of mind," discloses Ryan Cayabyab, SMFPA's executive and artistic director, who only has high praises for his former student. "I've seen him grow up, performing in choirs and he's very good."

Palaruan will lead the San Miguel Master Chorale as it performs Asian pieces in a cappella and accompanied voices on March 13, 8 p.m., at the CCP Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo. Titled "Kayumanggi," the chorale concert includes the special participation of the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra.

"It's a rare thing that a Filipino choir will present 100 percent Asian music. So it's called 'Kayumanggi' because it's a representation of Asian composers. From the first song up to the last, we will only feature Asian chorale pieces," explains Palaruan, who hails from Ifugao.

From poignant hymns to powerful chants, "Kayumanggi" features compositions from local and other Asian talents, who were notably trained in the Philippines.

"We have composers from Indonesia and India. The unique thing is they were trained here in church music, but in the Asian context. When we think of religious music, we only think of Western and European music. Never would we think that someone from Ambon, Indonesia, would have compositions for sacred music," says Palaruan.

Tapestry

Among the impressive works in the repertoire, Cayabyab picks the opening piece, Francisco Feliciano's "Silence My Soul" as his personal favorite, while Palaruan chooses one of Cayabyab's works, the award-winning "Misa 2000" (Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, Agnus Dei).

"'Misa 2000' is a tapestry of all kinds of styles. Most of the rhythms are dance-based and you can actually see the dance within the music. It's so exciting that the orchestra and choir complement each other in this piece," shares Palaruan.

Another enjoyable composition is "Tokigong" by Christian Tamaela of Indonesia. "He didn't even know it's nice," laughs Palaruan. "There are clappings contextualized in the song."

Admirable, too, is "Glong Ngo Ko" by Bagoba composer Excelsis Betil. The work is a combination of three different dialects. "This piece features an extreme range of alto. And it's only in this chorale that we have three of them," Palaruan proudly says.

Cayabyab's "Preghiera Semplice" is also a noteworthy piece. "It's a new work. It's the St. Francis Prayer but we're doing it in the original Italian. The approach is on the serious bent," says the multiawarded composer.

Superb

While other choirs may find the song selection too daunting, Cayabyab guarantees a superb performance from the San Miguel Master Chorale, an Aliw awardee for best chorale group.

"I can say we got the crème de la crème here. They cannot be part of the choir if they're not good. Close to 400 auditioned (when it was formed in 2000), and now we have the top 40. All are degree holders, graduates of music colleges," says Cayabyab.

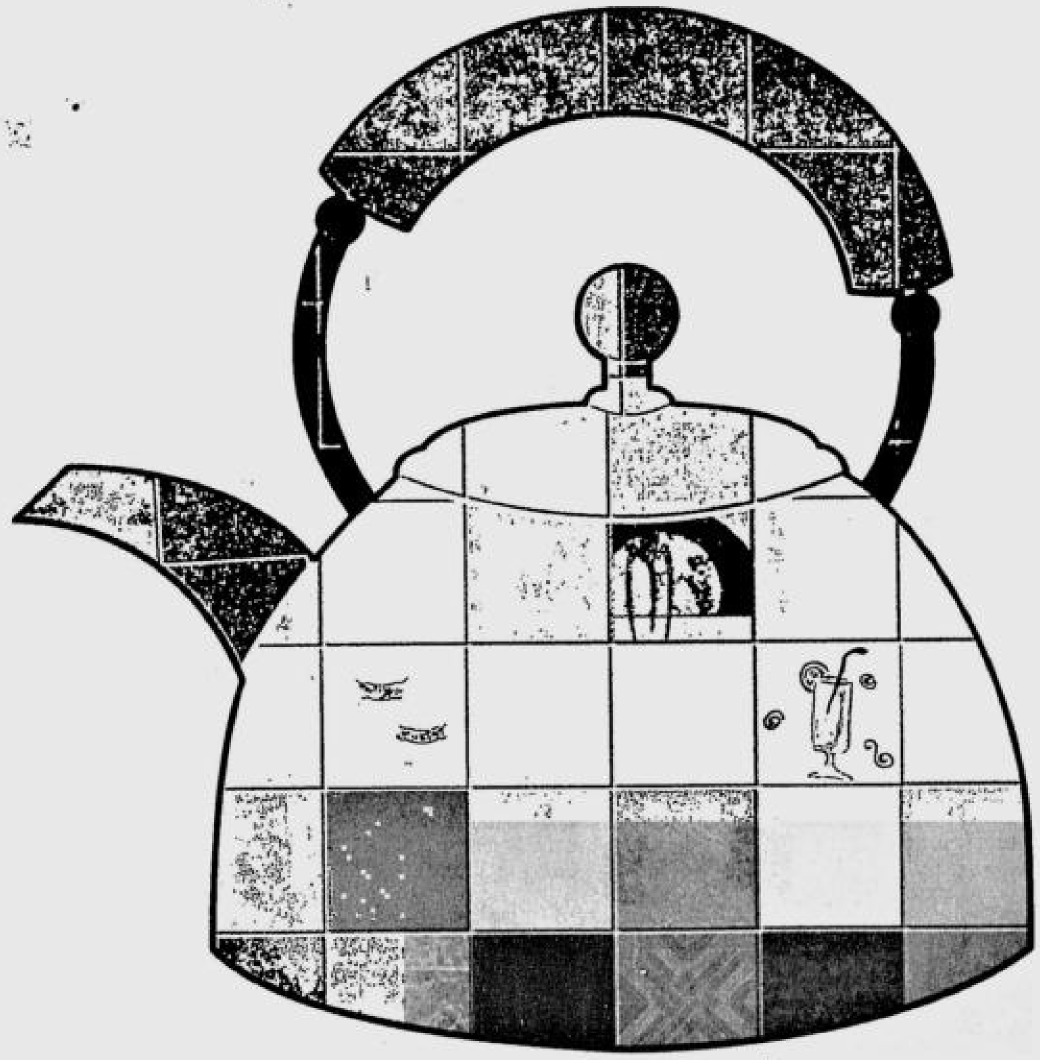
Palaruan, who's working with SMMC for the first time, is very impressed. "This is what you call a choir where nothing is impossible. It's easy. They know the rudiments. During the first rehearsal, we finished 10 pieces. Some choir will take a week to finish one or two songs. That's how quick they are," he says.

Cayabyab promises that the experience of listening to the choir would be like "moving into a different plane, hearing the insight of the conductor."

But aside from imparting a spiritual experience, Cayabyab hopes that "Kayumanggi" will showcase the impressive crop of Asian talents. "Asians are doing well—the Japanese, South Koreans, Taiwanese. *Tayo rin, mataas na ang* quality. It's time for Asians to be considered a force in music," he says.

For more information on "Kayumanggi," call SMFPA at 6323698. For ticket reservations, call Ticketworld at 8919999.

SMFPA executive and artistic director Ryan Cayabyab RUDY ESPERAS



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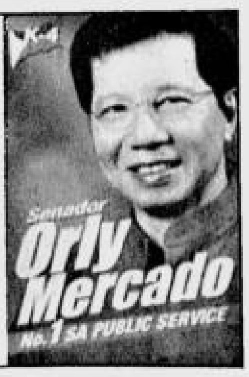

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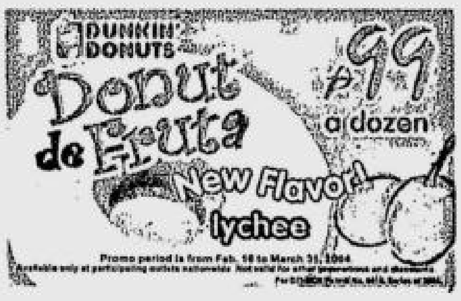

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Of 'broas,' 'biscochos' and Bohol

ALL4ART

Bea Zobel Jr.

A READER, Mr. Michael Manuba, wrote to ask me about *biscocho* and about *broas*. He asked if *biscocho* was the Spanish word for biscuits.

Well this is what I have to say: First of all, this should prove that I actually have readers! And now to address Mr. Manuba's question.

Biscocho is a Spanish pound cake. I don't know why it came to refer to a hard dry biscuit here in the Philippines. Then of course, many Spanish words get changed around when they cross the Seven Seas: *esquina, terno, derecho*—and so forth and so on, but that is another article!

My Spanish cousin came to Manila for a few days and she tells me that *broas* is very well known in Spain. But the *broas* there is also known as Bizcocho de Soletilla. The Spanish type is soft and is usually put around a cake. They are also used to absorb any alcohol or liqueur calling them "Borrachos" (Drunkards).

Now let's get on with our Philippine *broas*.

Michael, you must try the *broas* of Bohol. They are heavenly! Light and crisp and—I am getting ahead of myself again. In case you will mistake this for a food column I asked Gardy Labad of Bohol to pitch in with some historical information about this delicious product of his province.

No one knows when *broas* was introduced to the Philippines. (We just know it's scrumptious!) In Bohol the earliest examples are credited to the Rocha hermanas. There were four: Felomina, Gregoria, Concepcion and Tomasa. They specialized in *biscochos finos*. As I've already explained, this means that they produced fine cakes.

Other contemporaries famous for their desserts were Gabina Rocha Gonzaga and Catalina Pernia. Apparently the Rochas attended a culinary school in Manila with two other Bohol ladies also known for their cooking: Edwarda and Digna Clarin. These two in turn were aunts of Rosa Clarin or Osang. It is from Osang that the lineage of the more famous *broas* makers descend. There are three: Osang's, Sampaguita and Lady Fingers.

***BROAS* in the clay oven**

DELICIOUS Chocolate Hills

Osang's and Sampaguita maintain bakeries in the town of Baclayon a few minutes from Bohol's capital, Tagbilaran.

Osang never really wrote down her recipe and her list of ingredients. She simply showed those who were interested how. She liked to say, "*delikado ang broas*." Meaning that making the thin wafers was a delicate affair. She is said to have rejected any piece that had a crack. She left her measuring cup to her granddaughter, Sylvia Fernandez Maristela.

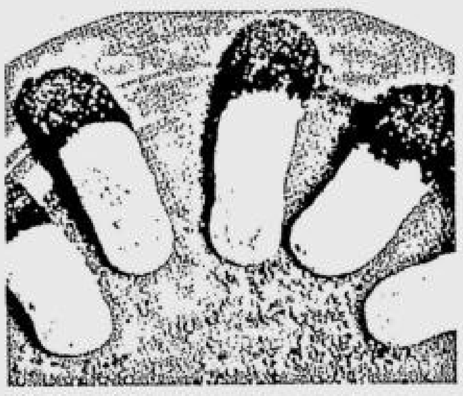
Making *broas* begins with eggs. The whole egg is used. This actually exposes as a misconception the idea that the *broas* industry of Baclayon developed to utilize the parts of the egg that were not mixed in with the mortar used for the construction of the town's massive church.

Next, flour and sugar are folded in. The whole mixture is squeezed out through a pastry bag, forming the narrow shapes. Then it is off to the clay oven. After the *broas* are cooked, they are laid out on a mat of *buri* midribs set over red-hot coals. This is so that the biscuits achieve that oh-so-perfect crispness.

Imagine entering a kitchen warmed by the sweet scents of *broas* and seeing the little wafers arrayed on their bed of twigs. The best part is that one is always allowed to pick up some pieces to taste. Believe me, I did a lot of tasting all in the name of research!

When you think about it, this concern for that ultimate crispness is so sophisticated. It shows a food sensibility that is so refined.

We are told that only Osang's still uses the twig mats for the final stage. This makes Osang's methods the more traditional of the two. Both bakeries however still use kindling to fuel their ovens. I remember seeing a dog fast asleep on the pile of firewood stacked outside the bakery. A friend of mine dryly observed: "Look they're using a traditional dog-burning oven!" Now I'm going to be in trouble with animal rights advocates for that joke!



***BROAS* with chocolate**

PHOTO FROM FOOD MAGAZINE

We bought *broas* from Osang's and from Sampaguita to see if there were any differences. I don't know just how many biscuits we tried all because of our dedication to science! In the end we all agreed that we couldn't really tell the difference. But we also agreed that every single one of the *broas* was fabulous!

The only question left unanswered is why oh why is it that the restaurants and resorts of Bohol don't serve the wonderful *broas* with chocolate for breakfast or *merienda*.

I think this is a clear example of what we miss out on because we don't appreciate our local traditions and resources so enchanted we are by what is foreign.

And what we miss out on is the most wonderful bit of heaven in a biscuit. It is delicate and crispy. With every bite one tastes our history as well as the lives and passions of our women lingering on our tongues.

For questions and comments, e-mail beartist@filipinaslibrary.org.ph or address letters to Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati Ave., Ayala Triangle, Makati City.

Why oh why don't the resorts of Bohol serve 'broas,' a taste of heaven and history?

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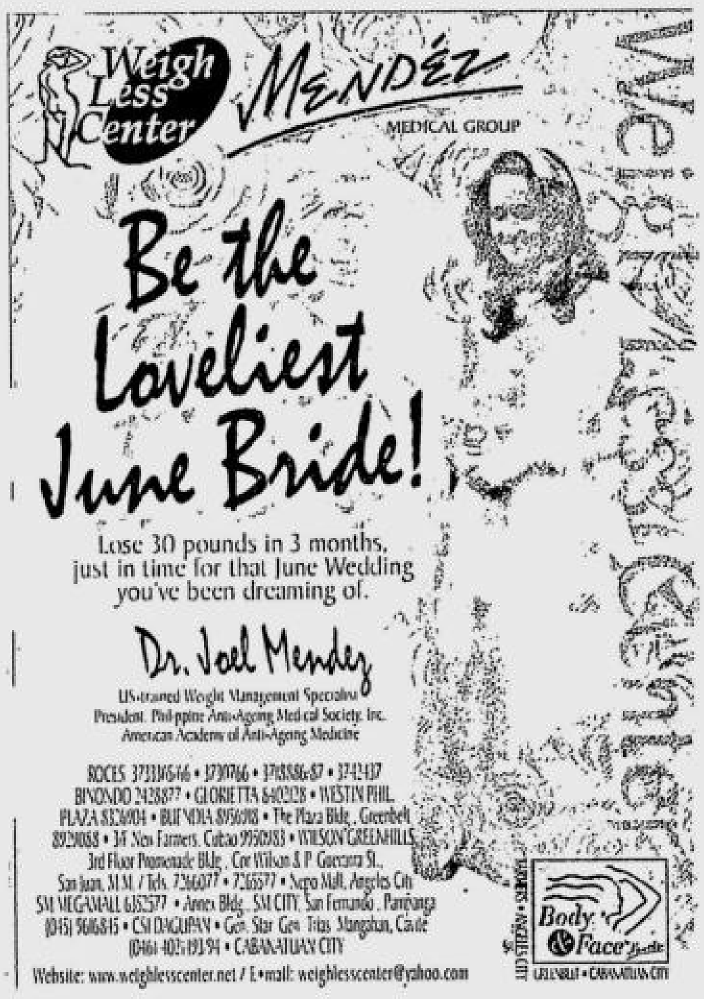

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Upholding the Pancake House tradition

Martin I. P. Lorenzo, Chairman and President

As soon as Martin Lorenzo took over the management of Pancake House, Inc. four years ago, he made sure every aspect of the restaurant's operations was improved. With this, Lorenzo clearly cited the direction he wanted. And that is, "to make Pancake House the third place people would want to be in."

"The first place is of course the home, and the second would be your school or office," Lorenzo said. "But when people go out, we want to be their choice of dining destination."

This is why, for the past years, Lorenzo has put so much emphasis on the word "comfort" where Pancake House is concerned. "I want the restaurant to serve as comfort zones of people--one which is easily accessible, looks homey and is comfortable, and one that provides comforting food served in a comfortable environment," he said. "At the end of the day our goal is just to give delight to our customers."

Foremost priority in Lorenzo's management is to repackage the restaurant as a wholesome and homey dining place, offering delicious food at reasonable prices. This comes on top of the other improvements he already accomplished for the 30-year-old restaurant chain. These include creating a fresher look for Pancake House, expanding its menu selection to cater to a broader market, hiring and training a younger set of crew, reorganizing its central commissary, and computerizing its operations.

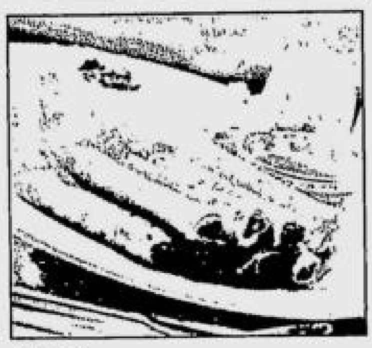
THE MANAGEMENT TEAM (from left): ***Claire Sumajit,*** Director of Human Resources; ***Cecile Macaalay,*** Director for Corporate Planning; ***Bernadette Lee,*** Director of Sales and Marketing; ***Martin Lorenzo,*** Chairman & President; ***Viki Alejandrino,*** Head of Commissary; ***Joji Del Val,*** Director of Operations; ***Zeny Mercado,*** Director of Finance

Such changes have lured franchisees that today, 27 out of 47 Pancake House outlets are operated by franchise owners. Ten more stores are expected to open this year, and in three years, Lorenzo is aiming for a total of 65 to 70 outlets. "We're talking about 90 to 110 square meter outlets that, for their smaller space, would exude a homier feel," he said.

And what of competition? Lorenzo doesn't deny that in this age of fusion restaurants, Pancake House needs to compete even harder. He believes, however, that sticking to the restaurant's thrust would be the key to its success. "There's no secret, we just have to focus on the basics of what makes a restaurant sell -- good food, good choices, good ambiance, good service, good price, and sensitivity to market demands. We will continue to uphold these, that's why I believe we'll continue serving Filipinos for many years to come," he said.

Beyond the pancake success

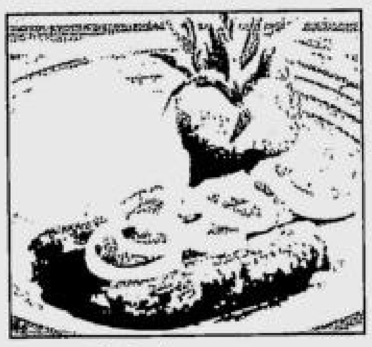
"We're more than just great pancakes."


Fish Rolls

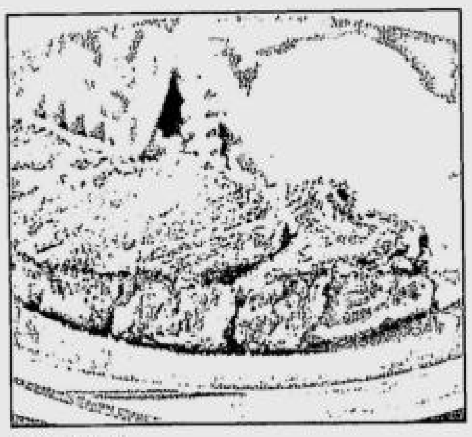
So goes the official slogan of Pancake House for its customers, as it continues the tradition of food excellence by going beyond offering its signature dishes. From its popular pancakes, tacos, and children's favorites spaghetti and chicken, the 30-year-old restaurant recently expanded its menu selection. It now serves a wide selection of "comfort food," an array of mouth-watering dishes familiar to the Filipino taste, topped off by the quality preparation, presentation and service that Pancake House has been long known for.

The new set of dishes -- which have transformed Pancake House into an all-day restaurant serving breakfast, lunch, and dinner -- will not replace the old favorites. "The bestsellers, pancakes, tacos, spaghetti and pan chicken, will remain," assures the restaurant's sales and marketing director Bernadette Lee. "We enhanced our menu to give our customers more choices. We want them to go home delighted after eating food that is not so foreign to their tastes, but are served with certain twists."

Crispy Belly


Bonoan Fish Steak

Pancake House's Crispy Belly, for instance, has been a hit among diners of late. It is their own version of the lechon kawali prepared, cooked and served the Pancake House way. Another new set of homey treats are the "Dish-tinations" meals, which consist of three rice dishes named after their places of origin: the Pork Vienna (similar to breaded porkloin served with a special sauce), Bonoan Fish Steak (bangus back marinated in a special soy sauce blend), and the Adobo Sulipan (loosely shredded pork and chicken meat served with hard-boiled egg and pickled kangkong). Again, the dishes are served with the Pancake House distinction.


Rib-eye steak

The steaks, of course, should not be forgotten, as these have earned a strong following among patrons who want to have large meals. Tender Rib-eye, Sirloin, and Tenderloin steaks are now being served at your nearest Pancake House outlets in Regular and Large portions. And the price? Very reasonable, says Lee. "At Pancake House, you'll be able to get good, quality food at a reasonable price. So your steaks won't come half the size of what you expected just because you paid lower."

Freshly Brewed Coffee & Turtle Pie

You can also visit the restaurant for a coffee break. Pancake House is now serving a new line of desserts, aside from the popular Classic, Blueberry and Chocolate Chip Pancakes. Oh, and don't forget to try the mouth-watering waffles, too.

All the dishes (and expect more to come soon) were developed by Pancake House's very own research and development team, which makes sure all the food served in its 47 restaurants have passed strict tests and quality control standards. Diners' comments are also considered when they develop a dish. And in order to remain competitive with other restaurants, Pancake House sees to it that dishes have good portioning, are served fast, and most importantly, are presented well.

These plus good pricing would surely delight their diners. And that is their goal. To make their customers happy, satisfied, and comforted after their visit to the restaurant. After introducing the relleno-tasting Fish Rolls and the all-Filipino Smoked Bangus, diners surely can't wait for the next best dish that would hit Pancake House soon.

Fast-tracking Filipino dining excellence

Surely, there is a secret to how Pancake House remains as strong as ever after 30 years in the dining business. The restaurant's president Martin Lorenzo credits it all to ensuring a dynamic and well-directed management pace. And more importantly, in upholding excellent dining tradition, which Pancake House has been wealthy of despite the many changes in the restaurant industry for the past years.

A taste of history – one of the early branches, in Magallanes.

Pancake House, a 100-percent Filipino-owned corporation, first opened in Magallanes, offering pancakes and waffles to a predominantly rice-consuming market. The restaurant was the brainchild of Milagros Basa who wanted to attract the A, B and upper C markets with her delicious, home-cooked style pancakes.

In 1974, Sta. Rosa Food Services Corporation and subsequently, Extrovert in 1998 were incorporated to hold ownership of the succeeding Pancake House outlets. The second branch opened in 1975 at the Ayala Arcade in Makati, followed by the third outlet in United Nations Avenue, Manila. The first franchised outlet opened in Greenhills, San Juan in 1978, after which a steady expansion saw the opening of both company-owned and franchised outlets. With the expansion also came the establishment of a central commissary that would support the restaurant's operational requirements.

By January 2000, the Pancake House chain of restaurants already had 22 outlets in Metro Manila with three outlets in Laguna and Tarlac. Thirteen of the outlets are franchises while nine are company-owned. On Feb. 15, 2000, a new investor group led

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by Martin P. Lorenzo entered into an Asset Purchase Agreement with Sta. Rosa Food Services Corporation and Extrovert for the purchase of the latter's entire operating assets. Thereon, Lorenzo's management continued to build on the dining tradition that Pancake House established through the past 30 years. Its solid reputation of serving quality food in a wholesome, homey environment was further strengthened with a new set of improvements: Refurbishing the restaurant's look including its logo and interiors, thoroughly training its staff, and ensuring the food is of the highest quality with improved standards.

Today the company is at greater heights with its continuous expansion. More outlets are expected to open soon. Provincial locations include the Olivarez Mall in Los Baños, the Technopark in Sta. Rosa Laguna, Tagaytay, Luisita Plaza in Tarlac, Petron Marilao, Subic, San Rafael Bulacan, Robinsons Starmills in San Fernando, Pampanga, Ayala Center Cebu, SM City Davao and Gaisano Mall Davao.

Tagaytay outlet

Its staff has also gone up to 900, creating jobs for the community where every Pancake House outlet is located. "In five years, Pancake House will still be the same Pancake House you've known through the decades. It will serve the same basic food with additional dishes perhaps, or a new look, depending on market demands. We want to be proactive with our market to be able to continue the food excellence tradition we've been known for," Lorenzo said.

Milestones

The numbers clearly sum up the success of Pancake House in its 30 years of service to Filipino diners. With more outlets opening this year, more staff being trained, and more pancakes getting sold - not to mention its roster of other new dishes - Pancake House has proven its excellence in establishing a tradition of quality food and service. Read on to find out what we have achieved, and the numbers we will aim to exceed as we continue serving you in the years to come.

- Pancake House has been of service to you since 1974, making this year our 30th year of serving quality food to Filipinos.
- We have opened 47 outlets throughout the Philippines, and more to open.
- 900 employees are currently working for Pancake House Inc., and more will be hired as more branches are set to open.
- We have served 3 million meals in the year 2003 alone.
- We receive 4,000 orders of our premium steak dishes every week in just half of the outlets where we launched them.
- We have an organized commissary system which supplies all the ingredients and equipment needed by our 47 outlets.
- Nothing beats the old favorite. Our Classic Pancake remains the best-seller in all our outlets, with the Blueberry and Chocolate pancakes as the most-ordered among our flavored pancakes.

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Php 1,325.00++ per person (CRUISE ONLY)
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Packed Dinner w/ One (1) Round of Beverage
Use of fishing rods and baits

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Set Lunch
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Complimentary glass of wine
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Roundtrip Island Tour from Caylabne to El Fraile & Carabao Island & back to Caylabne
Complimentary glass of wine
Snacks on board

OVERNIGHT FISHING CRUISE
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Set Lunch
Set Dinner
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(Caylabne - Island - Caylabne)
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Use of fishing rods and baits
Snacks

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Set Breakfast
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Snacks
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"A 25-Year Love Story with the Pinoy"
Edited by Alfred Yuson
Published by Jollibee Foods Corp.

By Ophelia A. Dimalanta
Contributor

A 25-Year Love Story with the Pinoy

IN this commemorative book of Jollibee Foods Corp. (JFC), editor Alfred Yuson gathered 25 of the country's respected writers, led by National Artist Nick Joaquin no less, to share their romantic liaison with the premiere fast-food chain, through different angles, from personal memory to economic history, architecture, semiotics and pop culture.

Aside from Joaquin, the writers include Manuel L.Quezon III, Wilson Lee Flores, Ruel S. De Vera. Carlomar Daoana, Micaela Fenix, Augusto Villalon, Minyong Ordonez, Marne Kilates, Philip Cu-Unjieng, Gilda C. Fernando and Manuel Chavez, Rina J. David, Mirava M. Yuson, Natasha Vizcarra, Lakambini Sitoy, Fran Ng, J.Albert Gamboa, Angelo Lacuesta, Carlos Cortes, Anthony Tan, Jose Dalisay, Jessica Zafra, Cesar Aquino, Cirilo Bautista and Raul Rodrigo.

REVIEW

Meanwhile, distinguished poets Marra Lanot, Ramon Sunico, Teo Antonio and Vim Nadera share their Jollibee vision in verse.

Topnotch visual artists Dengcoy Miel, Beaulah Taguiwalo, Cristina Taniguchi and Nik Ricio, the overall book designer, also contribute their visions.

Tony Tan Caktiong, CEO and president of JFC, calls the book a labor of love, signaling the start of many more love stories to come.

Joaquin speaks of Jollibee as a culture hero, " inventor of a snack tailored to our culture," fondly citing this very Filipino penchant for transforming what is foreign into something unmistakably Pinoy and doing all of us proud in the process.

Most of the essays are personal encounters with Jollibee: as pure happiness bespeaking of childhood joys, as magic and myth, as historical leap from humble beginnings to globalization. Some of the essays detail the rigorous stages of production, from blueprint to commissaries, the different savory menu of burgers, noodles, chicken and breakfast trays, and the celebrity endorsers from Gary V to Aga Muhlach.

Mascot

Then there is the colorful evolution of the Jollibee mascot, this lovable busy bee of every child's heart, which "straddles cycles and phases," according to Yuson, flitting happily from Luzon to Visayas, Mindanao and beyond.

What could be the reasons for Jollibee's phenomenal success? Cordero-Fernando cites its world-class technology, layout equipment, service system, its advertising and of course, very importantly, its peculiarly Pinoy taste.

The palate is the final arbiter. "Langhap-sarap!" That is a surefire winner. For indeed, the taste is in the smell and the smell is in the taste. Poetic synaesthesia of sorts. The taste is the text that is Jollibee.

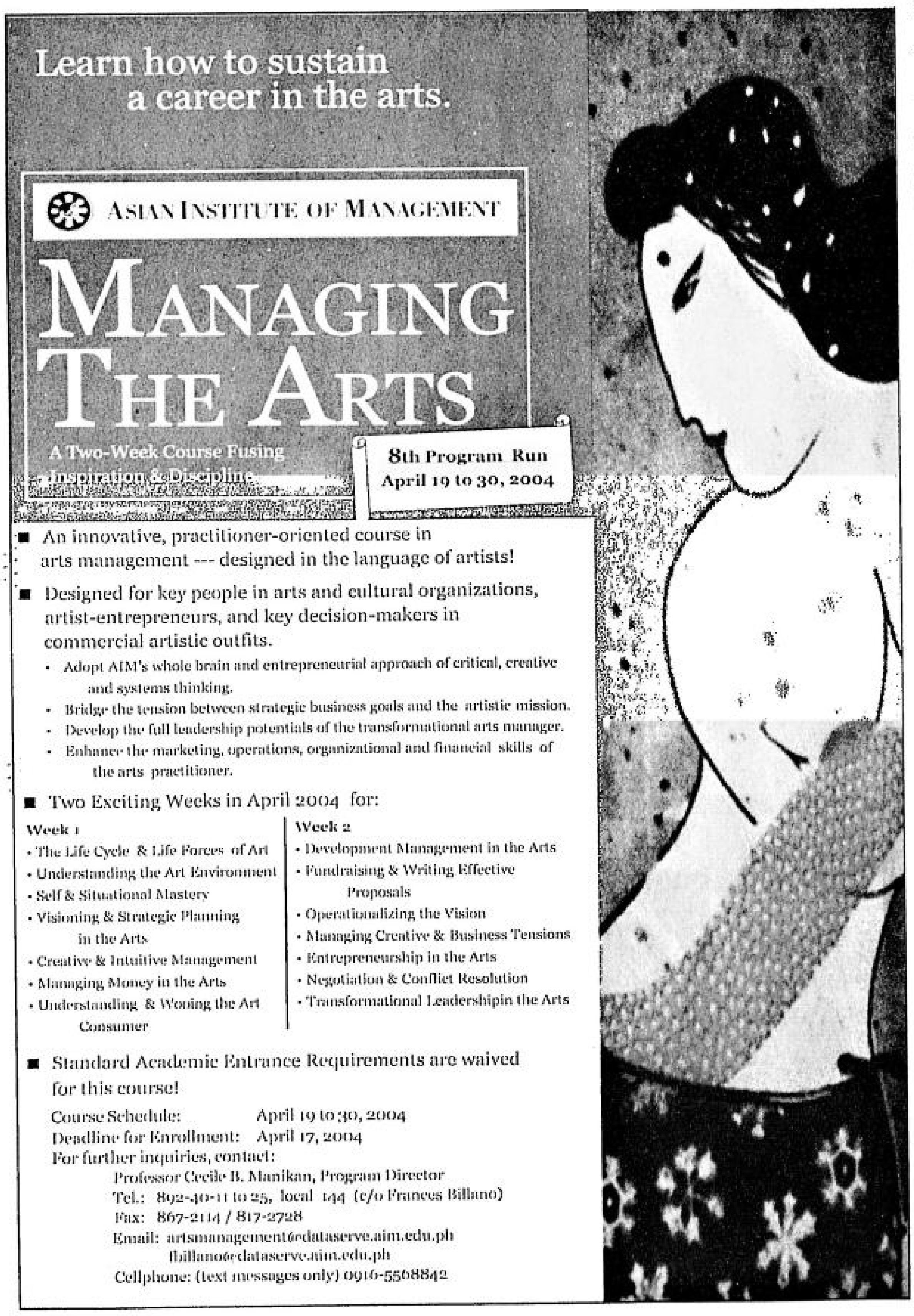
Cirilo Bautista goes beyond taste and posits semiotic insights on the Jollibee mascots as representing positive social values and engendering this sense of belonging to one Filipino community. "At Jollibee, you eat and smell tradition."

Jollibee is the "confluence of dedication and dreams," writes Ruel De Vera. "If Philippine children could dream collectively, they would dream Jollibee," says Cesar Aquino.

The company looks forward to more bounteous days, and the reason for such optimism, according to Raul Rodrigo. are "the O/C (obsessive-compulsive) factor, the perseverance factor and the value factor."

Commemorative books like this are really meant to be product enhancers. The readers are made to see the product in a better light. For instance, in my case, during rush lunch hours in the office, when I could not afford to dawdle over my plate, I would order "Chickenjoy *na lang*," which was not meant to demean the product, but really to show how convenient as well as satisfying of course, to fall back on the familiar fare of my everyday existence.

After reading the book, I would now exclaim emphatically, "Chickenjoy," every time I order—doubly aware that every bite I take of this crispilicious, not-just-plain breaded chicken, which resembles the taste of *chicharon*, is the result of world-class technology, vision and passion for nothing less than the Pinoy-best.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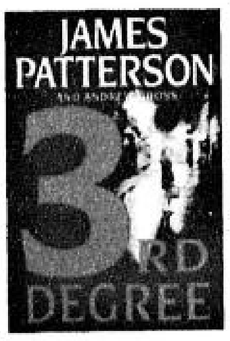

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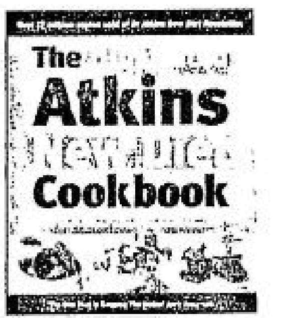
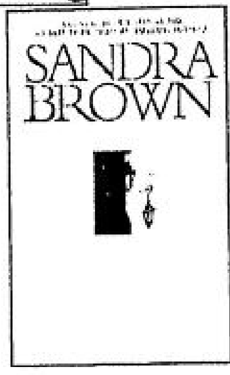
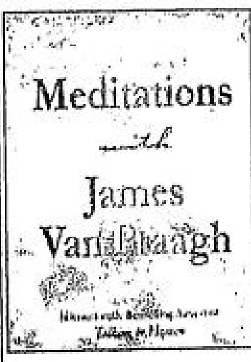




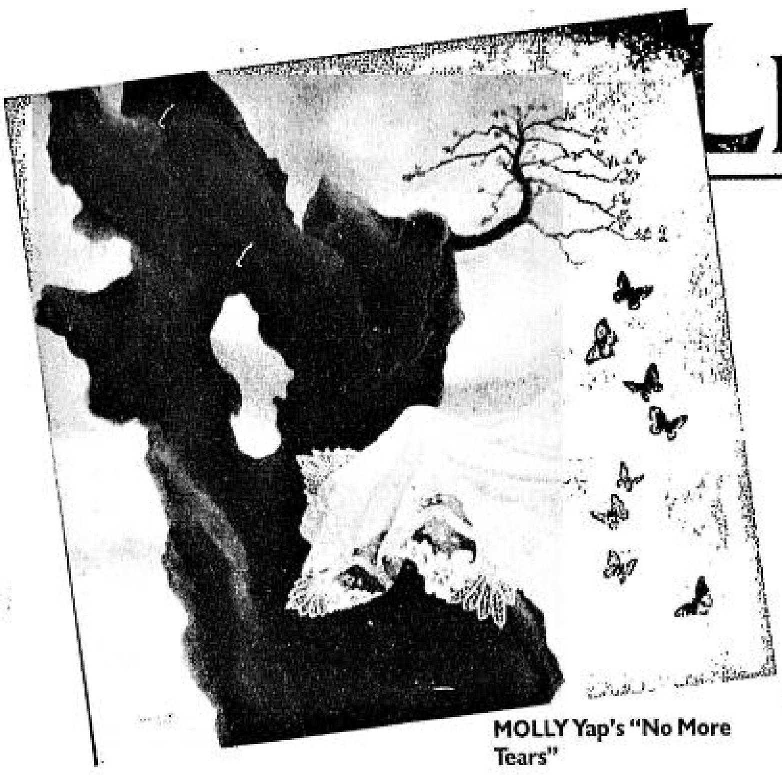


SEVEN THINGS THAT STEAL YOUR JOY
JOYCE MEYER

Ayala Alabang commemorative book to be launched

THE AYALA Alabang Village Association (Aava) will launch its 25th anniversary commemorative book "Silver, Ayala Alabang 25 Years Later" on March 9, 5 p.m., at Narra Park, Ayala Alabang Village. The event will be graced by former president Fidel V. Ramos and village founder Don Enrique Zobel, who will do the ribbon-cutting ceremony, together with former first lady Ming Ramos and Dee Zobel.

Call 8072519 or 8509279.



MOLLY Yap's "No More Tears"

'Weaving in Revolt' explores feminist aesthetics

Four women's journey of faith through art

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

A NEW generation of women artists has emerged, exploring varied visual expressions as they make their art known. Whether working in mainstream or alternative modes, the women harnessed new ways and explored wider realms of feminist aesthetics outside the traditionally male-dominated art world.

The four women who steadfastly pursued their artistic passion under Renato Habulan for some years demonstrate art's transforming role. Their exhibit showcases both their individual and collective journeys in art.

Though they have previously exhibited with other Habulan "students," this is the first time they are holding a joint exhibit.

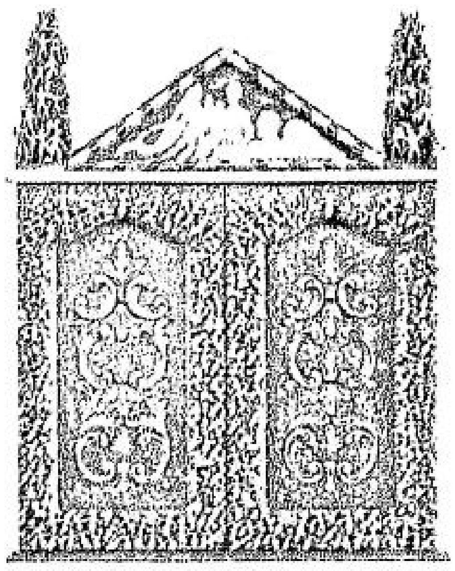
The women—Allison Wang David, Debbie Del-Pan, Teresita C. Mapua and Molly Yap—call themselves "Rebel Weavers," and their show, ongoing at the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) Museo ng Sining, "Weaving in Revolt."

Weavers of tales

The moniker is apt since the women profess to be weavers of their own stories of journeys. In their manifold roles as wives, mothers and emerging artists, they have much to share about how art transformed them, and the pain and pleasures as they reinvented themselves.

David was in the furniture business in Macau before she settled in Manila with her husband, a Filipino bank executive. Her lifelong passion for art led her to Habulan's class, where she learned the rudiments of figurative drawing and painting. She has developed her own style and, with Habulan's guidance, acquired the essentials in the use of materials and exploration of imagery.

FOUR/ G2



TERESITA Mapua's "Parokya, Why Do You Insist We Need to be Saved?"

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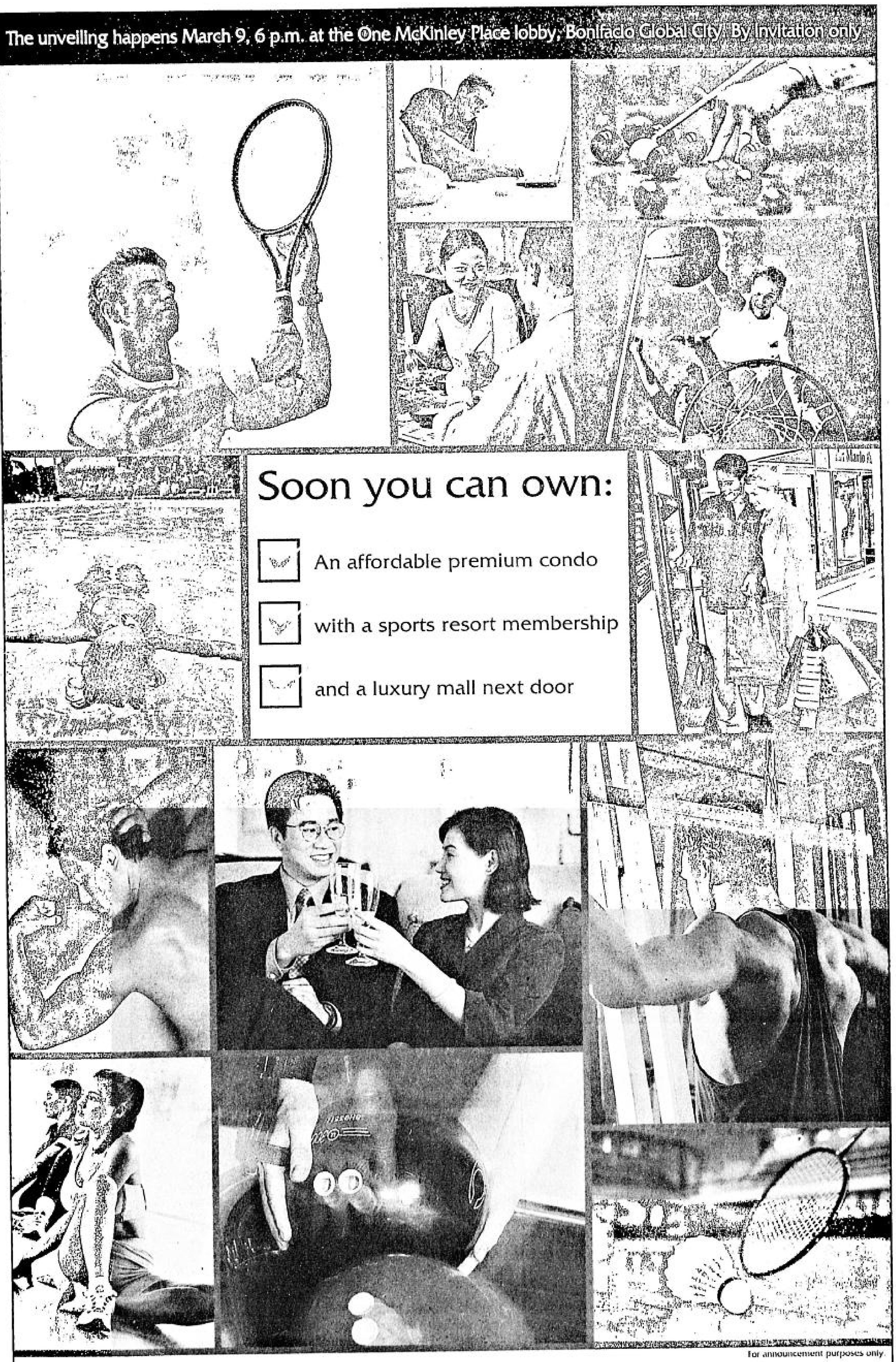

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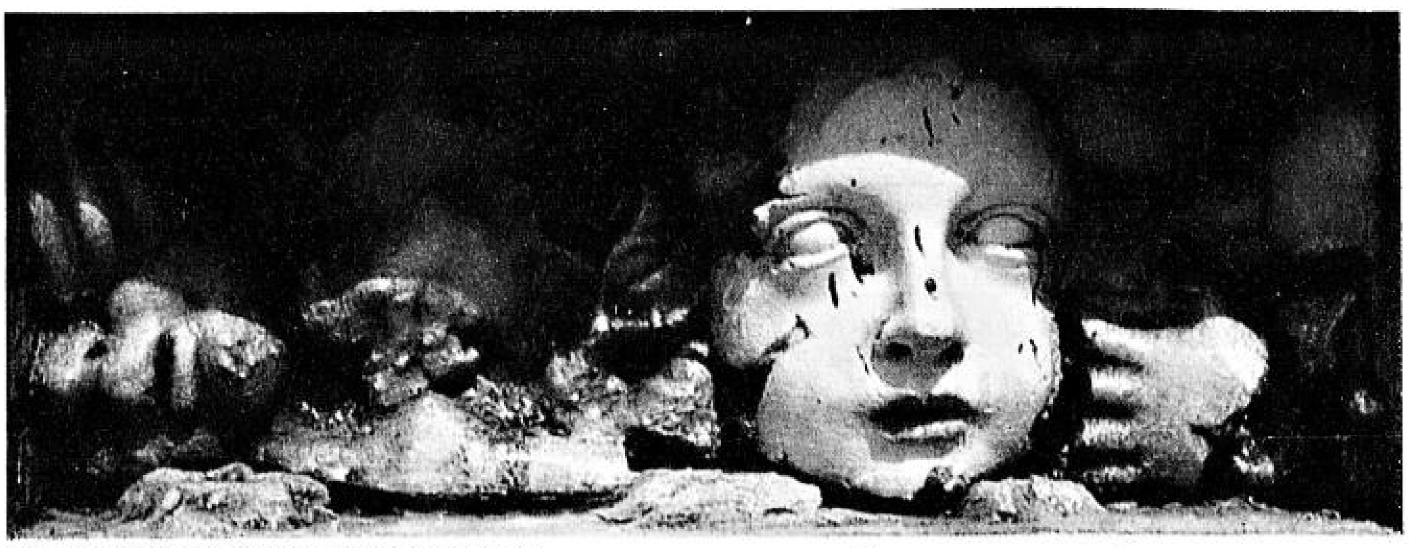


"MOURNING Cookies": Fragments from a graveyard

Such happy cadavers

By Constantino C. Tejero

RONALD Ventura, the master draftsman, has just come up with his first solo exhibit after receiving the Thirteen Artists Award from the Cultural Center of the Philippines late last year.

"Dead-End Images" was recently presented by The Big & Small Art Co. in the Art Center at the Artwalk, 4/L, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Here's the familiar imagery of such machine-like clarity, particularly the pristine renditions of the nude human form, this time displayed in a bigger venue as befits the large canvases.

Here are the signature dark color tones and near-monochrome, this time of brown and gray, chalky white, rust, burnt orange, gold, the occasional blue and red.

And this time it's not just Dali, Magritte and Delvaux who emerge as influences, but Ventura's art now appears to be also imbued with the Precisionism of the American New Realists Charles Sheeler and Richard Estes.

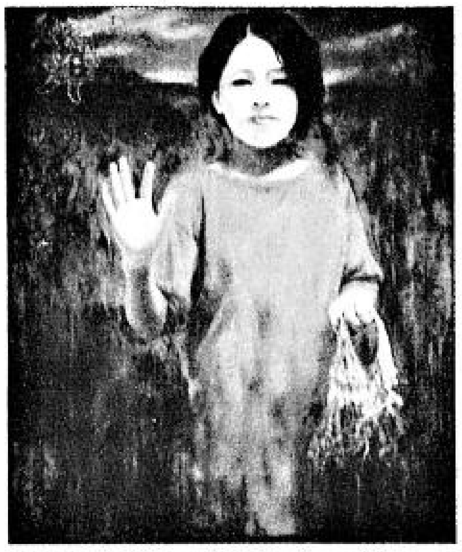
The 13 pieces of oil on canvas and the series of 10 sculptural pieces in mixed media depict children. Unlike his brother Olan's imagery of happy kids at play, however, Ventura's has masklike eyeless faces and skin of deathly pallor.

Even when engaged in strenuous activities, at work and at play, these kids appear corpse-like, cadaverous. In fact, in some pieces they have been dismembered, and in others they look like dolls, lifelike but lifeless.

In psychology, children are associated with death, explains the artist. Inspired by the imagery of the stillborn, when life is stopped at the child state, he takes off at this point for his theme of death and rebirth.

Uses and abuses

These are images of manipulation, specifically the uses and abuses of children. An obvious one is "Marionettes," where the three boys are but toys of the adult subliminally lurking in the background, presumably pulling the strings.



"NATIONAL Flower": The crime adults perpetrate on street children

In "Black Rainbow," the commodification of children is metaphorized in a dismembered boy presented as body parts to be used by the advertising world to showcase particular products.

In "Blancher Pink," the gender-specific hue of pink has turned grayish as the girl is transformed into a doll, a mannequin on the exposed structure of a hoop skirt, a model for children's dresses.

"Icarus," alluding to a mythical lad's vain attempt at flight, depicts the helplessness and futility of children in the adult world. One boy is in a cage while another, who is relatively free, has flimsy wings, indeed.

"Recipe" comments on how children are being used by advertising to sell medicines, vitamins, milk. Or it could be how kids are being forced or wheedled into taking their medicines—another instance of adult manipulation.

"Bedrock" has a more serious issue, as here the kids are being used for children's foundations. While the idle adult lies on a bed of luxury, the tots uphold the foundation.

Mechanism and machination

"National Flower" shows a girl selling *sampaguita* garlands, her richly colored clothes sharply contrasting with her pallid countenance. The title is wittily misleading, as it draws attention from the real issue, which is child labor—the crime adults perpetrate on those street kids hawking flowers, and other stuff for that matter, in the dangerous streets and highways.

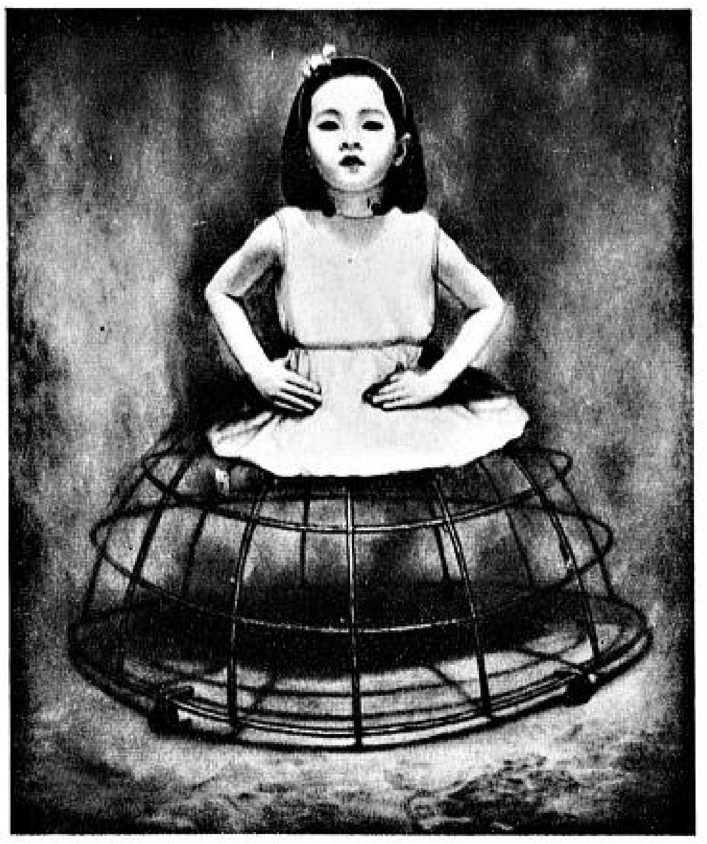
Notable in these paintings is the marginal imagery, such as the weird machinery in "Mystery of Blue Sky." This one points to the mechanism of commercial advertising using children for product endorsements on giant billboards, against an artificial sky of turquoise.

Often the central image is surrounded by subliminal images, as in "Snake's Rule" 1-4, where the kids are imprisoned in giant cubes (the dice from the board game Snakes & Ladders).

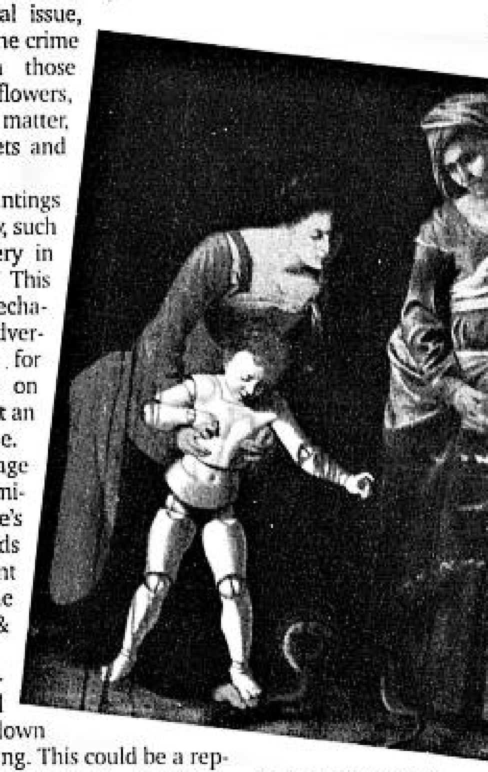
The subliminal image here, as in several other pieces, is of a clown rendered as line drawing. This could be a representative from the adult world, therefore, the power of darkness.

"Imitation" is a reproduction of the Caravaggio painting of the Madonna presenting the Child Jesus to St. Anne. The rich-toned canvas is diagrammed and the Holy Child has been recast as a golden mannequin.

This alludes to the divine machinations in the Gospel, specifically looking forward to the puppetry of the Passion, with Christ as the willing victim and God the master puppeteer.



"BLANCHER Pink": Commodification of the advertising world



"IMITATION": The puppetry of the Passion

Object and commodity

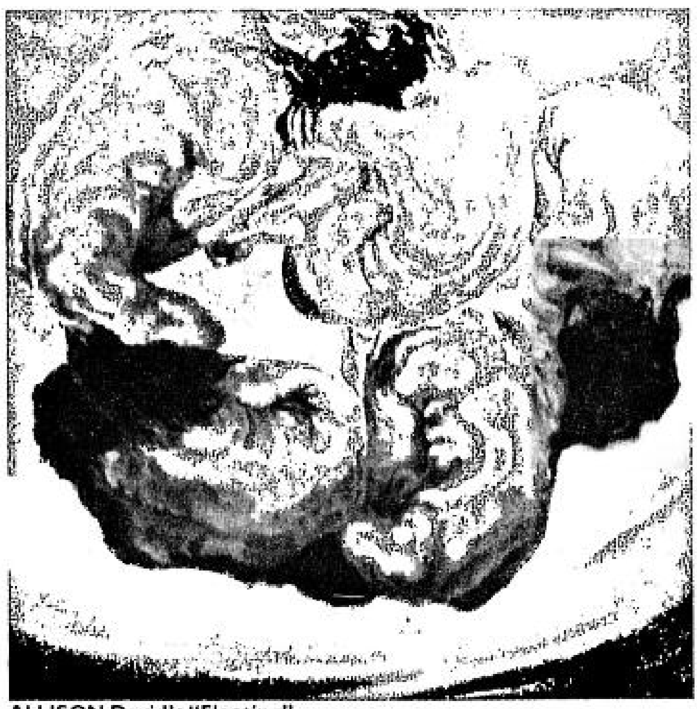
In "Mourning Cookies" 1-10, a series of sculptural pieces in resin, fiberglass, plaster of Paris, wood, oil, the artist is putting his foot down. The title referring to the cookies being served in wakes, the pieces look like fragments ransacked from an excavation site or graveyard.

The series is composed of white boxes containing molds and casts of faces, hands, torsos, as well as painted images, of children, cherubs, the Child Jesus. The accompanying bar codes signify the commercialization of children, who are but objects or commodities to adults.

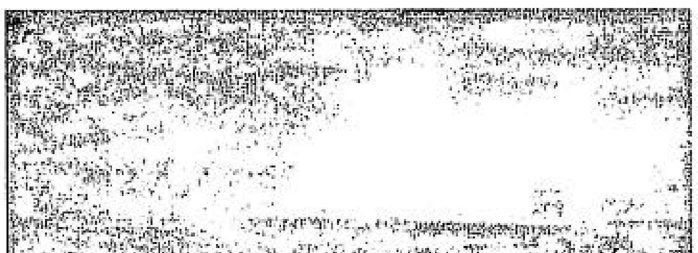
What's surprising, the artist has the chutzpah to display his molds as part of the exhibit. To top this effrontery, the molds are shattered.

"I want to present *sira na sira na* images to show how these children have been damaged by adults," says Ventura. "*At warak na ang* molds—this puts an end to the casting and multiple reproduction of the images. It's my way of saying, Stop the reproduction of these children. Stop the damage being done to them."

The imagery in this exhibit then is quite deceptive. Using symbols of innocence, harmlessness and vulnerability, the artist has created sinister images and explored the dynamics of power in society.



ALLISON David's "Floating"



DEBORAH Del-Pan's "Many Mansions, Many Rooms"

Four women's journey of faith through art

From page G1

David's style is avowedly expressionist, her trademark subject the human figure caught in an infinite maze of swirling and shimmering forms, images that suggest the quest for freedom and identity.

With her bold and remarkably vigorous brushwork and truly dynamic palette sense, she engages the viewer in her rendering of the ever-changing concepts of time and space, the constant mutation of life's cycles.

Telling moments

Del-Pan, an American who has lived here most of her life with her husband even as her children are back in the United States, prefers to work in the figurative mode, painting women in telling moments of personal reflection or meditation.

These are, for the artist, periods of interaction between the external and the internal, the objective and the subjective, the real and the unreal, moving from selfhood to the outside world.

Using oil on textured canvas, her works are modern-day musings on the relationship of space, texture and imagery.

The moment encapsulated on her canvases expresses the intimate nature of discovery as well as its twists and turns. That moment may represent acceptance, recognition or, quite simply, a possibility, indeed, the nature of discovery itself.

Mapua belongs to the clan that established the Mapua Institute of Technology. She was vice president for administration before she decided to devote her time to art.

The artist considers her elder brother, architect-writer Obi Mapua, her first teacher, exposing her to drawing, coloring and model-making.

She studied Oriental Watercolor and Ink Painting under Korean National Artist Homoon Youn and later enroled at the Asean Institute of Fine Arts under Rod Paras-Perez.

Junk and found objects

Mapua uses a variety of materials and found objects, reconfiguring them to confront age-old precepts about religion, morality, ecology and other contemporary issues. The artist, a vegetarian and yoga disciple, has used junk pieces like dried leaves, plastic or wooden toys, computer parts, recycling and altering them on her canvases, in diptych or triptych formats.

She tends to use longish titles, often couched in thought-provoking questions, like "Oracle, If We Burn the Rainforests, Will the Seeds Have Time to Grow?"

Yap started studying art in 1999, enroling in Chinese painting at the Philippine Zi-Der Chinese Art of Manila. From landscape and still life, she has expanded to portraitures. Her work in the show integrates her interests in bonsai and patchwork.

Yap's subject harks back to a time early in her marriage when she would keep busy as she waited for her children to come home from school. She enlivens her compositions with living creatures such as birds and butterflies.

"Weaving in Revolt" at the GSIS Museo ng Sining Financial Center, Pasay City, ends March 9. Call 0917-4596260 or 5113101.

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

Datuin at GSIS, Japanese prints at Shangri-La Plaza

VISUAL ARTS

THE GSIS Museo ng Sining presents Joe Datuin's "Line Links" on March 8. The artist showcases 20 artworks created in free-flow style, the highlight of which are the monumental "Pillars of Peace." Call 9207765.

THE JAPAN Foundation Manila Office and the Shangri-La Plaza will open "Japanese Prints 1950-1990" on Level 4 of the mall on March 10 at 6 p.m. Japanese prints are illustrations from carved blocks of wood and printed on paper, portraying scenes from everyday life, theater and popular entertainment. Japanese refer to the depictions as a "floating world." The show features 75 works from 46 artists.

SYANO Artlink (Shanghai Street, Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque) features Dionisio Gonzales' "The Wild" until March 15. The works show the artist's emotional nature in the guise of imaginary portraits.

LINYA GALLERY presents "Surfacing" until March 14 at Door 4, G&S Padilla Building, Andres Bonifacio Avenue, Tibanga, Iligan City. The exhibit features the works of four young artists in the Mindanao contemporary visual arts scene: Edzon de la Cruz, Chris Gomez, Kurt Lluch and Ivan Macarambon.

TINA Colayco, chair of the Department of Theory at the UP College of Fine Arts, will hold a lecture on Filipino heritage and identity as having been shaped by shared history and migrant ancestry around Asia. The lecture, "A Sense of Belonging: The Ties That Bind," will be on March 13 at the Lopez Memorial Museum (Benpres Bldg., Exchange Road cor. Meralco Ave., Pasig City), 2-4 p.m. The lecture is part of the "Essence and Sympathies" exhibition, until March 15.

FOODPARKS by Raintree presents Dionesio Gonzales' "A Beginner's Watercolours" until April 3 at the Food & Art Galerie, 12/F, GT Tower International, Ayala Avenue cor. H.V. de la Costa St., Makati.

THE METROPOLITAN Museum of Manila is extending its exhibit "Turns of the Terno: Honoring Terno Makers and Terno-Making" until May 31 at the Tall and Upper Level Galleries. The exhibit consists of 12 sections which deal with the use of the terno in different parts of the country. Showcased in the exhibit are the terno creations of the late Joe Salazar. The Met Museum is at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Manila.

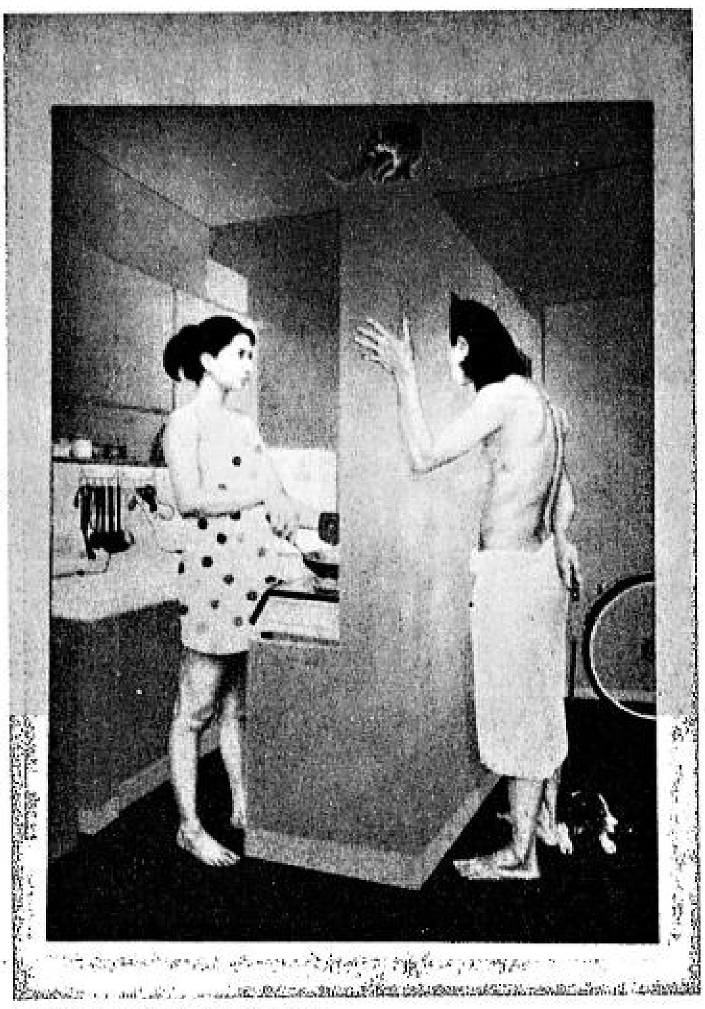
THE POSITIVISM summer art workshop is now accepting applicants to its sessions on basic painting and drawing. The workshop will start on April 1. Call 8996358/ 0927-5522288.

Self-Portraits 2

ATENEO Art Gallery launches "Self-Portraits 2: Fourteen Filipina Artists Speak," a book collaboration of Thelma Kintanar and Sylvia Mendez Ventura on a number of women visual artists, on March 12, 4:30 p.m., at Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, QC. A special exhibit and sale of the featured artists' works will be held at the Aliww Reading Room, 3/F, Ateneo Rizal Library, March 12-19.

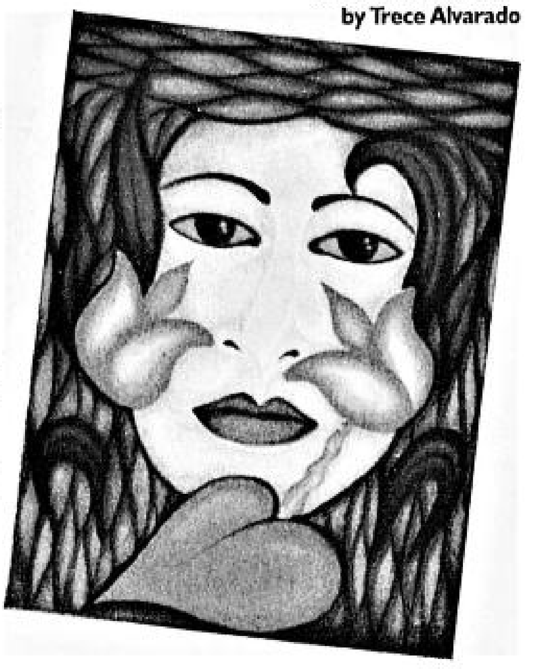
The language of love is also the art of the artist

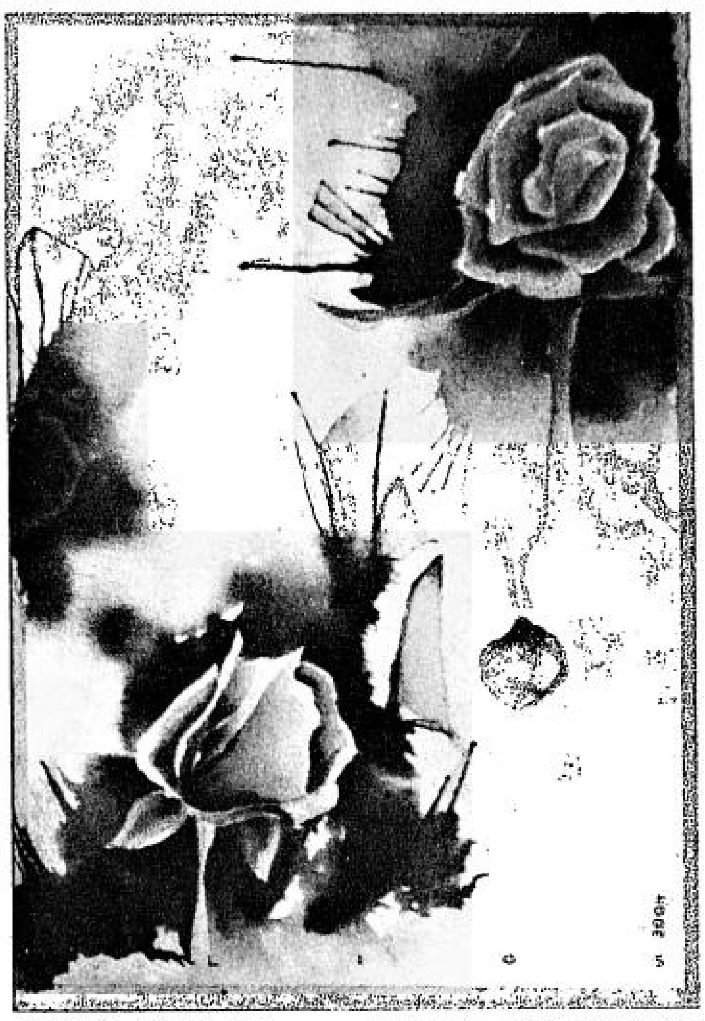
Love as a 'gift-object'



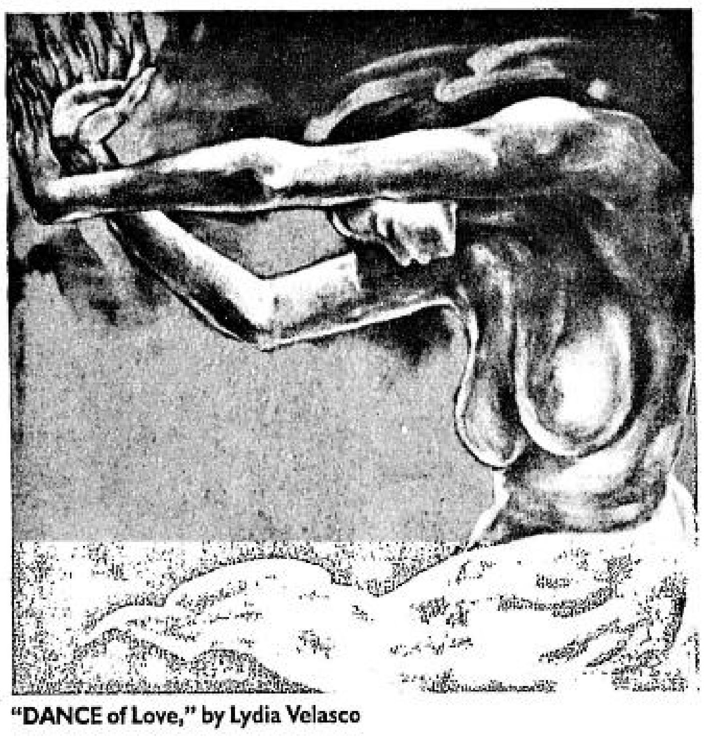
"UNTITLED," by Olan Ventura

"MUKHA sa Hardin," by Trece Alvarado

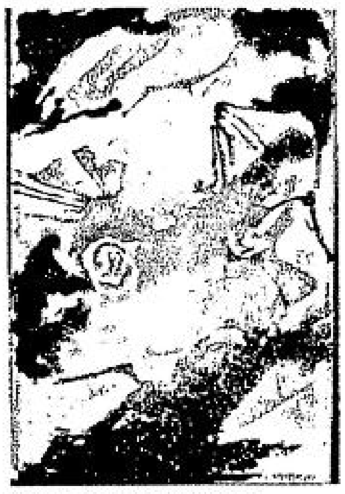




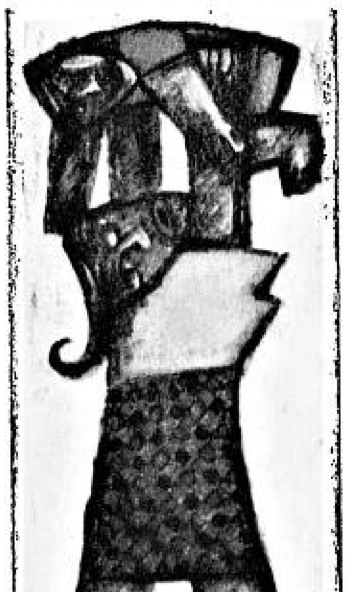
"FALL I," by Elios Santos



"DANCE of Love," by Lydia Velasco



"FALL 2," by Elios Santos



"DUGSING," by Nunelucio Alvarado

By Jessica Jalandoni-Robillos
Contributor

THE DELIGHTFUL little volume titled "A Lover's Discourse" by French writer and semiotician Roland Barthes is essential for those who love. It contains the musings, ruminations, and the language of a lover in solitude, who's often in doubt, perpetually besieged by fear of affection unrequited. The one constant is the emotion, the state of being besotted that cannot be removed. This is a situation millions find themselves in, constituting Barthes' discourse as a language universal.

It could perhaps be recommended, too, to artists, if one is to liken their process of creating with the plight of the enamored, the resulting artworks subject to the attention, whether appreciative or derisive, of viewers. It could also be a metaphor for the artist's love affair with the craft and medium, particularly when conception is slow or inspiration elusive.

The word "heart" or "coeur," according to Barthes, "refers to all kinds of movements and desires, but what is constant is that the heart is constituted into a gift-object—whether ignored or rejected."

Heart is an apt reference for Lydia Velasco's "Dance of Love" series. For Velasco, action or movement is the greatest expression, and the form of her subjects imparts this clearly. One is reminded of King David whose gyrations were acts of praise and love for God. In the same way, love for God for Velasco is the ultimate; she says she's but a medium for spreading grace through her paintings. For her, "everything is love, there are plenty of kinds, and it is forever."

Notable in Velasco's new femmes fatales is the change of skin tones from the bright yellow tinged with green to more toned-down hues. Though the figures are in various states of undress, often just swathed by a sheer sheet, lasciviousness is absent. That the figures are set against expanses of, for the artist, "less intense" colors, does not in any way lessen the intensity of the work. Her shift to more minimalist canvases is actually a venture into a realm more sublime.

Failed relationship

With "Mukha sa Hardin," 31-year-old Trece Alvarado captures the sadness of a failed relationship. The face, jaundiced, is one of melancholy, framed by hair blue as the sky with blooms on its sides and a heart-shaped anthurium. It is a Laguna lass that Trece reminisces about, and the gardens which served as their havens, having had to lose her to outside forces that would not let the union prosper. It may be synonymous to Barthe's "souvenir"—"Happy and/or tormenting remembrance of an object, a gesture, a scene linked to the loved being and marked by the intrusion of the imperfect tense into the grammar of the lover's discourse."

In a display of true sibling love, Trece's penchant for depicting nature in extremes, from deforestation to lush foliage, is encouraged and supported by no less than older brother, Nunelucio Alvarado. It is Trece who mans Syano Artlink gallery for his Manong (Ilonggo for Kuya) Nune.

Famed for his works tackling the plight of *sakadas* or plantation workers in socially polarized Negros, Nune Alvarado presents filial joy, a love that tides people through the toughest times, in "Dugsing," which may roughly be translated as "affectionate physical play"; it is a happily atypical Mother and Child painting. Rare because it is without the usual dark backdrop of the artist's social commentary, the mother clad in cane field fashion tossing into the air her child, a brief respite from toiling; the stark white background signifying that their love is the only thing certain amid the hardship.

Alvarado is converting his studio in Sagay, Negros Occidental, into Bunga Gallery, which aims to introduce the barangay to the arts and art livelihood. He hopes to transform the community into an artists' village with the help of the local group Pintor Kulapol.

Watercolor's mercy

Being at love's mercy is the same as waiting for watercolor to reveal endless possibilities. In Elios Santos' "Fall" series, washes of violets, reds, oranges and blues, make flowers seem to appear or flow out of nowhere. This, for Elios, signifies the "fall," which may either be the stages of falling for someone, or the fall season. "Tag-lagas," he says, is an analogy for how a person comes undone when he unravels emotionally as he falls in love.

Metrobank grand prize winner Rex Tatlonghari subscribes to the same, that love comes with uncertainty. Ever pragmatic despite his iconography, "love in general" for Rex is an intermingling of the beautiful and pure with the painful, as shown by his three white roses in full bloom. Its thorny stems intertwined to form the shape of a heart, one stem breaking at the pointed bottom from which a lone tear drops. His usual marbled earth background also implies dearth as it may be seen as parched soil. His icons may seem sappy, which at times is love's folly anyway. But with a closer look, Tatlonghari's depth emerges.

Along the same vein of the less-than-romantic realities of love is Olan Ventura's photo-realistic take on man and woman's relationship. The keen precision with which Olan explores domesticity and intimacy defines a love that is all too real, his subjects the very members of his family. Ironically, this perception is what makes this artist's outlook romantic. Currently on exhibit at the Art Center in Megamall are pieces which consistently expound on the "Couple," as his show is dubbed. Marked are his heightened attention to detail and utilization of canvas space as structure.

It is said that the reason for wearing the wedding ring on the fourth finger of the left hand is that in it is a nerve which runs directly to the heart. From these artists' hands, then, their hearts flow, with each stroke and every dab of paint. Their artworks are, as Barthes would say, the definitive "gift-objects."

E-mail the author at jejaro2002@yahoo.com.

Art auction at Astra

MEMBERS of the Blumentritt Group of Artists donated two paintings each to the GMA Kapuso Foundation. Raffle tickets are sold at P7,000 each. Each ticket holder is guaranteed to win a painting. Artworks for raffle may be viewed at Gallerie Astra, 2/F, LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St., Makati.

Join!
Search for
Miss Silka 2004

MECHANICS:

1. All natural born females residing in the Philippines between 18 - 24 years old meeting the criteria below are invited to join the search for Miss Silka 2004:
   - fair complexion
   - at least 5'3" in height
   - with pleasing personality of good moral character
   - College level or College graduate

*PROMO STARTS DECEMBER 1, 2003 UNTIL MARCH 31, 2004

2. Entries have to be mailed with the following requirements enclosed:
   - one (1) label or empty box carton of any Silka product
   - Bio-data including name, address, contact number and signature
   - Vital statistics including height and weight
   - 3R size close-up colored picture
   - 4R size full-body colored picture
3. Entries have to be mailed to the following address:

Search for Miss Silka 2004
c/o PBS ADVERTISING
Dolmar Building, 1122 Perez Street,
cor. U.N. Avenue, Paco Manila

4. Selection Process:
   - There will be four (4) qualification rounds held before the day of Miss Silka 2004 Pageant.
   - For each qualification round, twenty (20) candidates will be interviewed. Three (3) will be chosen as finalists for each round – for a total of twelve (12) finalists to compete for the title of Miss Silka 2004 on the day of the pageant.
   - Selected candidates and finalists will be notified through registered mail For those residing in remote areas of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, 2-way transportation fare and 1 night hotel accommodation will be provided for the participant and 1 companion.

Schedule of Events:

Event	Event Date	Last Day for Entry Submission
Qualification round # 1	January 10, 2004	December 31, 2003
Qualification round # 2	February 7, 2004	January 31, 2004
Qualification round # 3	March 6, 2004	February 29, 2004
Qualification round # 4	April 3, 2004	March 31, 2004
Miss Silka Pageant 2004	April 24, 2004	

*Only one entry per participant will be acknowledged throughout the duration of the search.
*All Silka employees, distributors, retailers and advertising agencies, including their relatives up to the 3rd degree of consanguinity or affinity are excluded.

5. Awards:

Miss Silka 2004 winner
- Php 100,000
- one (1) year exclusive contract with Cosmetique Asia, promoting all Silka products through mall tours, TV guesting and other PR activities
- an exclusive date with TV Star and Silka Endorser John Lloyd Cruz

1st runner up
- Php 50,000
- Silka gift pack

2nd runner up
- Php 30,000
- Silka gift pack

12 finalists chosen during the elimination rounds
- Php 5,000
- Silka gift pack

Candidates Interviewed
- Silka gift pack

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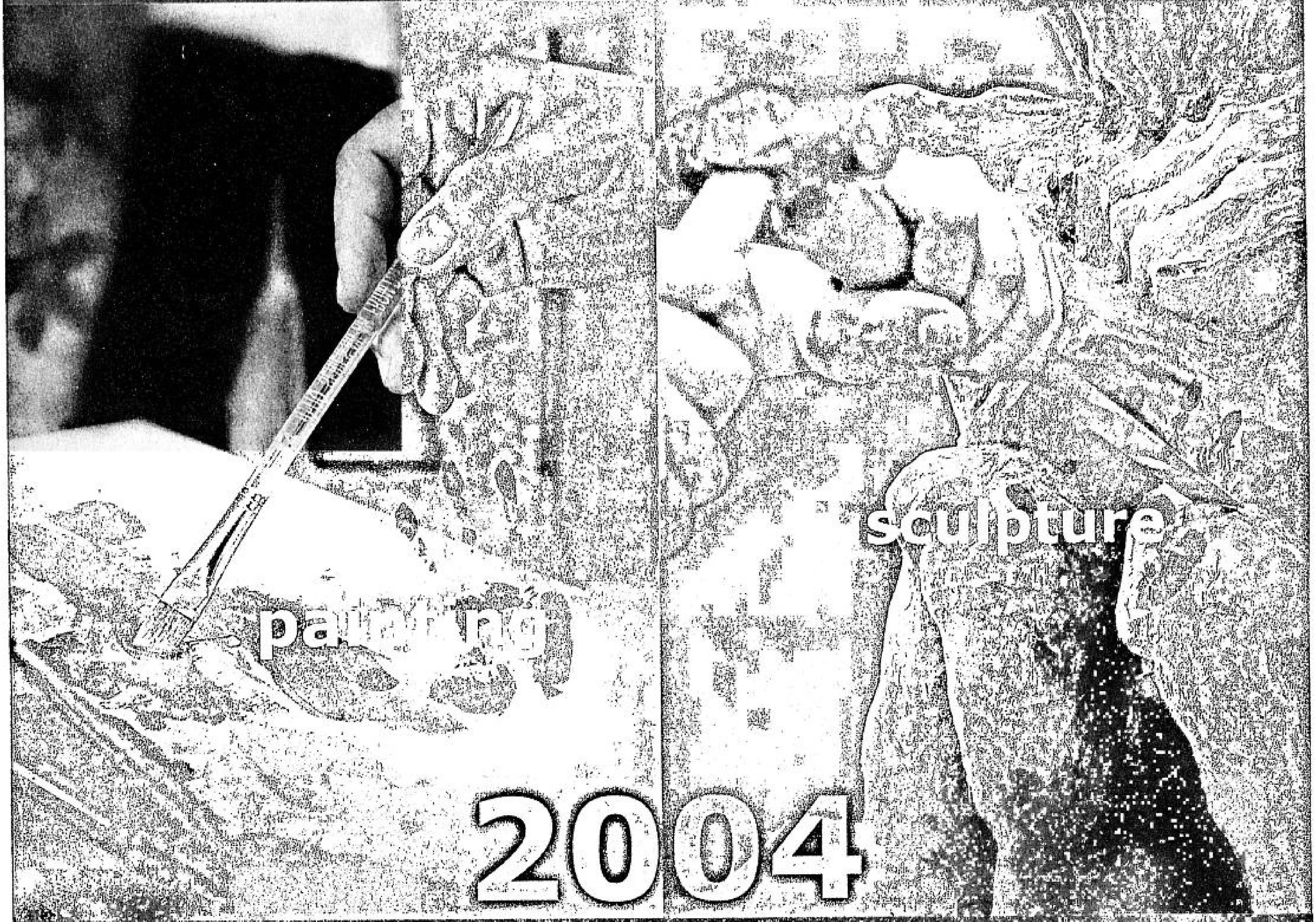
METROBANK ART & DESIGN EXCELLENCE

NATIONAL COMPETITION



Formerly known as the YOUNG PAINTERS' ANNUAL that started in 1984 and ran for twenty years, the competition has taken a big leap to open new avenues of expression. Now known as the METROBANK ART and DESIGN EXCELLENCE (MADE), a national competition for young Painters, Sculptors, Architects and Interior Designers, MADE is an expansion of Metrobank Foundation's mission to recognize talented young artists and launch them to national prominence.

Cash awards and medallions await the winners of the Competition. Painting winners will each receive P120,000 (1st place), P110,000 (2nd place), P100,000 (3rd place). Sculpture, Architecture and Interior Design top winners will receive P100,000 each.

Schedule:

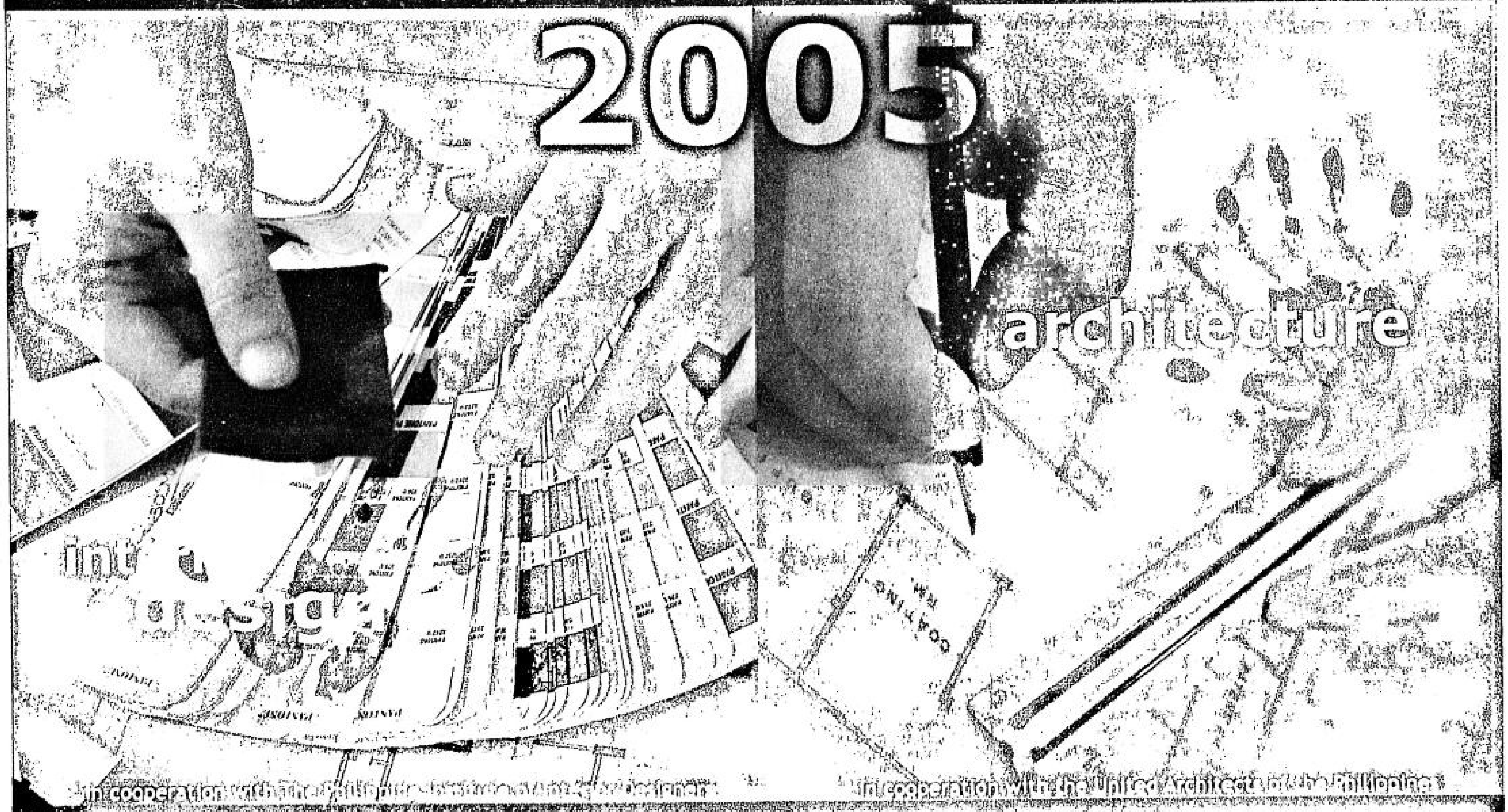
2004 Launching of the Metrobank Art and Design Excellence(MADE) National Competition/Receiving of entries for the Painting and Sculpture Categories/ Awarding of the Painting and Sculpture winners

2005 Receiving of entries for the Architecture and Interior Design categories/Receiving of entries for the 2005 Painting and Sculpture categories/ Awarding of the 2005 winners for the Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, and Interior Design categories

For details on the Painting and Sculpture categories, entry forms are now available in Metrobank Branches nationwide.

For Architecture and Interior Design, entry forms will be available by April 2004.

For queries, call us at 898.8856 / 898.8855 / 750.0837
email: foundation@metrobank.com.ph



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Women's Month

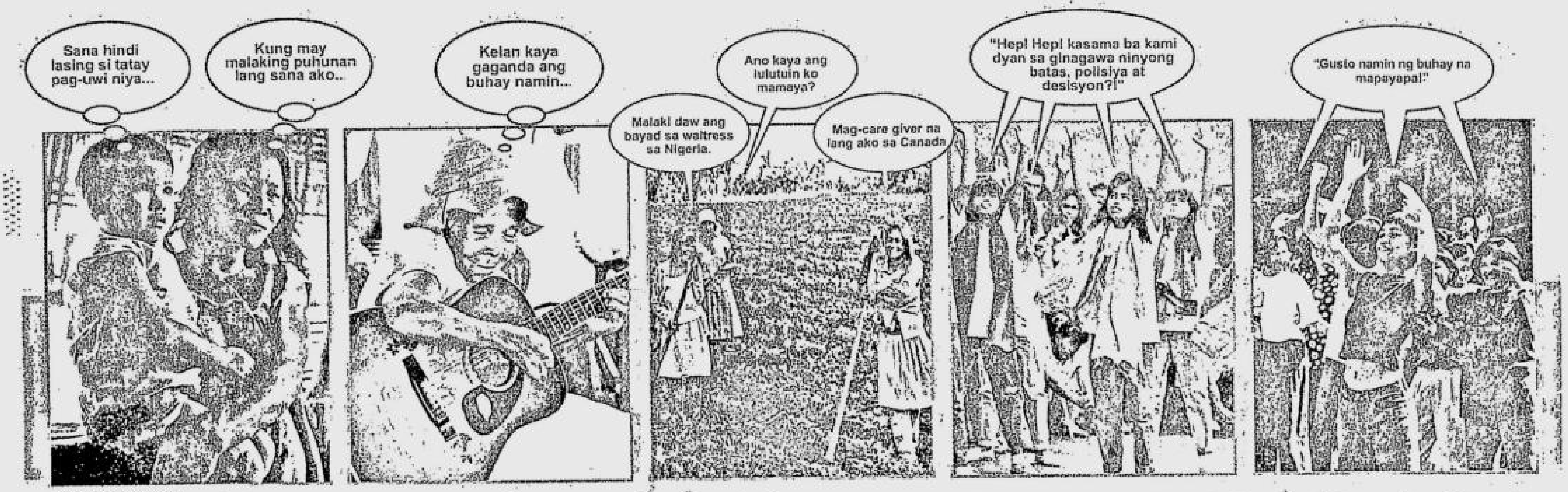
March to equality continues

WOMEN'S struggle for equality spanned decades. Today's women are lucky to experience the kind of freedom they are enjoying now. And it is all because of the heroic acts in the past by remarkable women who fought against discrimination.

There is still so much to work on other countries where women still suffer from random discrimination and unjust treatment of society.

That's why the Women's Day or Women's Month should always be celebrated to let the world know the value of women in society. It

MARCH/ H2


Sana hindi lasing si tatay pag-uwi niya...
Kung may malaking puhunan lang sana ako..
Kelan kaya gaganda ang buhay namin...
Malaki daw ang bayad sa waitress sa Nigeria.
Ano kaya ang lulutuin ko mamaya?
Mag-care giver na lang ako sa Canada
"Hep! Hep! kasama ba kami dyan sa ginagawa ninyong batas, polisiya at desisyon?!"
"Gusto namin ng buhay na mapayapa!"

All photos courtesy of:
Ed Gerlock

The Journey To Peace And Freedom Is Ours

WOMEN'S MONTH 2004

GENDER-RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE IS...

PARTICIPATORY. It ensures women's active & meaningful participation in governance & decision-making processes.

UPHOLDING THE RULE OF LAW. Women's empowerment & gender equality are promoted by the country's laws and national policies.

TRANSPARENCY. Information are made available to women to enable them to have access to & to benefit from programs & services,

EQUITABLE. It pursues affirmative actions to uplift the status & conditions of women.

RESPONSIVE. It takes a close look at the situation of women & ensures that programs & services respond women's practical & strategic needs.

EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT. It ensures that resources & development initiatives benefit both for women & men.

PROMOTING CONSENSUS. It institutionalizes peace-building & peaceful means to conflict solutions.

HAVING ACCOUNTABILITY. It ensures that programs & services are reviewed & assessed for its responsiveness to the needs of women.

STRATEGIC. It ensures a holistic & sustained approach to addressing the needs of women. It promotes the elimination of gender stereotypes.

"Nagkakaisang Kababaihan Tungo sa Kapayapaan at Mabuting Pamamahala"

WOMEN'S MONTH 2004 CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

March	Activity	Venue/ Time	Sponsoring Agency / Organization
8	**NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION** **• Signing of Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act**	**Cuneta Astrodome, Pasay City**	NCRFW
8	National Women's Day Celebration: "Honoring the Bangsamoro Women of Distinction" Theme: Babae: Lakas at Landas ng Kinabukasan (Women: Power and Light of the Future)	Shariff Kabunsuan Cultural Complex ARMM Compound, Cotabato City	ARMM, Rgn XII, City Govt. of Cotabato, NGOs / POs
8	Women's Parade	Davao City, Plaza Libertad, Tacloban City, and San Fernando, Pampanga	DENR GADFP Davao with OGAS; Region 8; and MGB Region 3
12	Women's Month Celebration Launching of: • Search for Women Nation-Builders • 3rd Edition of primer on Women's Rights	Club Filipino Greenhills, San Juan 2:00 pm	Women Involved in Nation-Building (WIN)
15-19	Tiangge Sa DTI	DTI Ground Floor, Makati City	DTI
16-17	Launching of White Ribbon Campaign & organization of Men's Advocacy Network in Biliran (MAN in Biliran)	Provincial Capitol Grounds Calumpang, Naval Biliran	Office of the Governor, Province of Biliran
18-19	Dental - Medical Service	DENR Region 8	DENR Region 8
19	Energy Conservation Seminar	PCUP 10:00 - 4:00 pm	PCUP
26	**Alay sa Kababaihan Concert** **Women's Month Culminating Activity** **Featuring: Color It Red, Velvet, Matilda, Fuseboxx, Olympic Smoker, Bent and other new female bands.**	**WOW Philippines Intramuros, Manila** **6:00 pm onwards**	**NCRFW, DOT**
26	Livelihood Outreach Program	Barangay San Pedro Batangas City	DENR
26	Walk for a Cause	Morning	DOTC
30	Awarding of Outstanding Women (NCWP)	Conrado Benitez Hall, Philippine Women's University, 1:00 - 5:00 pm	NCWP
Whole Month of March	Free Medical Services / Check up (Breast and Cervical Examination, Pap Smear, etc.)	Whole month of March	DOH
	• Call Center Service "Government at Work Information Network" "GAWIN 1345" call service for women's month activities • Media Relations	PIA Call Center	PIA

The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women

The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) leads government in its pursuit of the twin goals of women's empowerment and gender equality. To do this, it adopts the gender mainstreaming strategy where gender issues are considered when government plans, budgets for, monitors and evaluates development policies, programs and projects. This way, the whole bureaucracy is collectively and strategically helped to address gender issues.

There is no fast or easy way to gender mainstreaming. But NCRFW goes about this with sensitivity to the concerns of agencies, patience, and passion to convince them to think and act gender. Together with its partners in government, the civil society, and the academe, it formulated a three-year "Framework Plan for Women" as basis for crafting and implementing programs and projects to promote women's economic empowerment, protect their human rights, and promote gender-responsive governance. Some of the major interventions it has been critically involved in this year include:

- Passage of laws to address violence against women, namely the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 or Republic Act 9208 and the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act, and the ratification by the Senate of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

- Publication of information/training materials and tools for gender-responsive governance such as the Gender Mainstreaming Resource Kit and the Primer on Violence Against Women;

- Facilitation of deeper understanding of gender issues and harmonized efforts between and among stakeholders by holding workshops, dialogues and forums and pioneering strategies to specifically address the issue of greater involvement of women in micro-finance;

- Strengthening of linkages and networks among leaders in promoting gender-responsive governance notably the partnership of NCRFW with select agencies in implementing the following initiatives: creation of Inter-Agency Committee on Anti-Trafficking composed of DOJ, DSWD, DFA, DOLE, POEA, BOI, PNP, DOT, DepEd, NBI, PCTC, PIA and CFO; harmonization of government efforts to combat VAW through the VAW Coordinating Committee (VAWCC) composed of PNP, NBI, DSWD, DOH, DOJ, NSCB, CSC, DILG, NAPOLCOM, DepEd, AFD-DND, CHR, BJMP and PIA; formulation of a comprehensive GAD Plan for the Judiciary with the Committee on Gender-responsiveness of the Judiciary of the Supreme Court; and strengthening of GAD Budget policy through a Joint Circular with DBM and NEDA;

- Increasing the number of national government agencies implementing gender and development like provision of credit assistance to more than one million women beneficiaries, livelihood training, post-harvest facilities, and marketing assistance to women; conduct of development; and management of cooperatives for women cooperative members;

- Increasing the number of local government units adopting gender-responsive practices through the GAD Resource Centers, GAD Resource Network, and incentives for best practices at the local level such as the "*Galing Pook*" Special Citation on Gender-responsive Local Governance; and

- Recognition given to the Philippines for modeling best practices in gender mainstreaming as evidenced by the increasing number of foreign delegates requesting for study visits, orientations and briefings from the NCRFW.

For more information, please visit our website at www.ncrfw.gov.ph or call us at 735-1654, 7367712 or 7354955.

Women's Month

March to equality continues

WOMEN'S struggle for equality spanned decades. Today's women are lucky to experience the kind of freedom they are enjoying now. And it is all because of the heroic acts in the past by remarkable women who fought against discrimination.

There is still so much to work on other countries where women still suffer from random discrimination and unjust treatment of society.

That's why the Women's Day or Women's Month should always be celebrated to let the world know the value of women in society. It

MARCH'H

The Journey To Peace And Freedom Is Ours

WOMEN'S MONTH 2004

GENDER-RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE IS:

PARTICIPATORY. It ensures women's active & meaningful participation in governance & decision-making processes.

UPHOLDING THE RULE OF LAW. Women's empowerment & gender equality are promoted by the country's laws and national policies.

TRANSPARENCY. Information are made available to women to enable them to have access to & to benefit from programs & services.

EQUITABLE. It pursues affirmative actions to uplift the status & conditions of women.

RESPONSIVE. It takes a close look at the situation of women & ensures that programs & services respond women's practical & strategic needs.

EFFECTIVE & EFFICIENT. It ensures that resources & development initiatives benefit both for women & men.

PROMOTING CONSENSUS. It institutionalizes peace-building & peaceful means to conflict solutions.

HAVING ACCOUNTABILITY. It ensures that programs & services are reviewed & assessed for its responsiveness to the needs of women.

STRATEGIC. It ensures a holistic & sustained approach to addressing the needs of women. It promotes the elimination of gender stereotypes.

Nagkakaisang Kababaihan Tungo sa Kapayapaan at Mabuting Pamamahala

WOMEN'S MONTH 2004 CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

March	Activity	Venue/ Time	Spoqsoring Agency / Organization
8	**NATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION** **• Signing of Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act**	**Cuneta Astrodome, Pasay City**	NCRFW
8	National Women's Day Celebration: "Honoring the Bangsamoro Women of Distinction" Theme: Babae: Lakas at Landas ng Kinabukasan (Women: Power and Light of the Future)	Shariff Kabunsuan Cultural Complex ARMM Compound, Colabato City	ARMM, Rgn XII, City Govt. of Colabato, NGOs / POs
8	Women's Parade	Davao City, Plaza Libertad, Tacloban City, and San Fernando, Pampanga	DENR GADFP Davao with OGAS; Region 8, and MGB Region 3
12	Women's Month Celebration Launching of: • Search for Women Nation-Builders • 3rd Edition of primer on Women's Rights	Club Filipino Greenhills, San Juan 2:00 pm	Women Involved in Nation-Building (WIN)
15-19	Tiangge Sa DTI	DTI Ground Floor, Makati City	DTI
16-17	Launching of White Ribbon Campaign & organization of Men's Advocacy Network in Biliran (MAN in Biliran)	Provincial Capitol Grounds Calumpang, Naval Biliran	Office of the Governor, Province of Biliran
18-19	Dental - Medical Service	DENR Region 8	DENR Region 8
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March to equality continues

From page H1

> Women's Day was first observed in the United States in 1909. This year, the National Council of Women of the Philippines (NCWP) has a month-long celebration.

is only fitting to honor the women who made a huge difference in life and influenced others to follow suit.

Women's Day was first observed in the United States in 1909. This year, the National Council of Women of the Philippines (NCWP) has a month-long celebration. The NCWP's activities will recognize the pioneering women who continue to leave marks in giving genuine services and advancing the cause of women, the marginalized sectors, and under-served areas in the countries.

Today will kick off the celebration at the Cuneta Astrodome from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Other women's organizations will be present.

Tomorrow, the Local Councils of Women-Non-government Organizations Advisory Council (LCW-NGOAC) and the Australian Embassy will hold a forum on the salient features of the Anti-Violence Against Women and their Children Act. The forum will also help determine areas of cooperation among LCWs, NGOs and other concerned groups that are involved in information dissemination. It will be held at the Australian Embassy, Tower 2, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati, from 10 a.m. to 12 nn.

From March 11 to 13, a Trainor's Training is scheduled at Ciudad Christia, San Mateo Rizal. It is a joint project of LCW-NGOAC and the Ateneo Center for Community Service with financial support of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The training aims to develop the capabilities of trainors in conducting voter's education for women at the barangay level.

On March 26, NCWP and the Filipino-Chinese Federation of Business and Professional Women of the Philippines will have a banquet for the Anniversary and Search for Outstanding Women at the Wack Wack Golf Country Club in Greenhills, San Juan at 7 p.m. Categories include Women in Business, Governance, and Profession.

And on March 30, the Awarding of Outstanding Women will be held at the Conrado Benitez Hall of the Philippine Women's University at 2 p.m. There are five categories for the awards: human rights, community service, economic empowerment, media, and sports.

All these activities honor the women who have greatly contributed in their own fields and define the role of the female species in the society.

Other important information can be obtained at 731-8888.

THE WHOLE team posing for posterity during the signing of the Memorandum of Agreement between NCRFW and J&J (Philippines) for the celebration of Women's Month in 2004. Shown are (standing, from left) Nellie Sagun, professional marketing Manager, J&J Philippines; AJ Magat, executive assistant, NCRFW, Roel Sun, brand manager for Modess; Jon Bantigue, marketing trainee; Eufrosina Dumlao, administrative officer, NCRFW; Kristine Bautista, brand manager for Carefree. Seated (from left), Amelou Benitez-Reyes, commissioner, NCRFW; Emmeline Versoza, executive director, NCRFW; Grace del Rosario-Castaño, president and managing director, J&J Philippines, And Cristina Sabarre, group brand manager, WOW Franchise, J&J Philippines.

Maliit man o malaking pamilya. Babae, pumili ng tama para sa iyo. A Women's Month message from Modess.

what women want

It used to be what your parents wanted. Or what society expected of you. Or what the establishment approved. Well not anymore you'd say. What most women want today is what they want for themselves. But you're quick to defend: selfish and arrogant is not what you have become. Getting the nod of your family and your community remains important to you. You can't help it. It's your Filipino DNA! Even when you hit 60, you have a psychological umbilical cord that connects you to home. But, chromosomes notwithstanding, you've become brave enough to make a stand. You've joined many who have taken responsibility for the choices they make, especially those that challenge the norm. And when such actions are questioned, you find your voice and readily proclaim, 'This is my right.'

I have a right to choose Malakas and Maganda.

Small surprise, you have pushed the boundaries that confine you to traditional roles. No longer is home the only place for you. Have you abandoned the role nature and society has bestowed upon you? Not so. The truth is, you even play dual roles. In most Filipino families, Mother is Father too. Not only are you a Significant Other to your husband, but also a significant partner, helping him provide for the family. 'And it comes with its rewards: you have the gold, you make the rules! You decide what purchase to make and where the money goes. Your gender bender role definitely puts a new twist to the Filipino myth.

Maganda is Malakas as well.

If you're the single woman, it's no different either. Your identity is not defined by having a man. After all, while marriage and family remain attractive options for you, they remain just that. Options. Being a wife is not the only role you aspire for. Educated and professionally mobile, you have the key that opens doors leading to different, yet equally fulfilling lifestyles. You've got family, friends, work and your very own private space, all providing pools of affirmation where you can draw your strength and character. Does this mean your marriage prospects has hit a dead end? Well, it has just taken a detour. And while you and your singleton sisters are on that road, you're not there just to enjoy the ride. You've actually become more circumspect about marriage. Thus, giving it the serious importance it deserves.

Her story in history

The bravest choices you make could be traced back to a generation of women who made a choice and changed the country. What's amazing is, these women helped build a young nation, long before the world knew the meaning of women's rights.

In pre-Hispanic times, for instance, the community sought the wise counsel of the babaylan or the chief priestess. Her choice was considered best for the community. Then, when Spain ruled the country, a few brave women chose freedom. Most prominent among them were Gabriela Silang and Gregoria de Jesus. Early on, they knew home was not the only place for them.

And the rest they say, is history. Well, we say 'her' story. For as the country moved forward, and sometimes took a few steps back, we have seen women from all walks of life, some known, but most of them faceless people in the crowd, making a difference in our society by simply exercising their right to choose.

Your choice matters.

And as the cycle of choice continues, you'd ask yourself, what makes the best choice? Take it from the one who knows women best: Modess, the trusted name in feminine protection. Uncompromising in its standard, constantly seeking new ways to make things even better. Modess bears the hallmarks of being the best. And it all stems from its sincere understanding of what women need, how they live their lives and what they want to be. So when women choose Modess, they know they are choosing the best protection ever. It is the best choice.

That's why Modess urges women like you to choose wisely. Scrutinize every option, weigh the pros and cons. And always be on the lookout for the best. With your rich heritage of wise women making choices, Modess is confident you will always choose well. You are, after all, a Filipino woman and you know what you want. Only the best will do, nothing less.

NEW
Modess
Maxi
COTTONY SOFT COVER
WITH WINGS

Johnson & Johnson

Buhay na pambahay lang? Hindi na ngayon. Babae, iyan ay dahil pumili ka ng tama para sa iyo. A Women's Month message from Modess.

PISO PARA SA KABABAIHAN. Bawa't bibilhin mong Modess, piso ang ibibigay-tulong sa UP-PGH Research on Women's Health.

CVD occurs more often among older women

WHEN women hear the words breast cancer, they often cringe. There is now a growing mentality among the female race that the disease to reckon is breast cancer. However, breast cancer may have claimed many lives but cardiovascular disease (CVD) still remains the number one killer disease among women.

There are many misperceptions about risks of CVD among women. Fewer than one in 10 women think of CVD as their greatest health problem, even though it represents 45 percent of all deaths for women age 25 and older. It is estimated that 500,000 women die each year because of CVD, exceeding the number of deaths because of other causes including all forms of cancer.

Elevated cholesterol is one of the most important contributors to a woman's risk of developing heart disease. According to Dr. Esperanza Cabral, past president of the Philippine Heart Association and a consultant and cardiology and internal medicine at the Philippine General Hospital, the risk of CVD increases in women increases when they reach the menopausal stage.

As a woman loses estrogen, her body goes through potentially harmful lipid changes, such as an increase in cholesterol levels. Research also indicates that estrogen loss has a direct effect on vascular tone.

"By about 15 years after the menopause, the risk of CVD in women is approximately the same as the risk of CVD in men of the same age. This is attributed to the loss of the protective effect against CVD that is attributed to female hormones estrogen and/or progesterone which is possessed by women not yet in menopausal stage," said Dr. Cabral.

Dr. Cabral said that the most frequent type of CVD in both men and women of this age is arteriosclerotic cardiovascular disease. Arteriosclerosis involves the buildup of deposits on the insides of the artery walls, which causes thickening and hardening of the arteries. People with elevated cholesterol are most prone to acquire such disease.

The cholesterol in our body plays a major part in the development of arteriosclerosis. Cholesterol combines with other substances in the bloodstream to form plaque, which thickens arterial walls, narrowing the inner channel and impeding blood flow.

Plaque can rupture, encouraging blood clots that can block the vessel entirely.

The consequent narrowing of the arteries then makes blood pressure that is already high even higher. As the arteries become less pliable and less permeable, cells may experience ischemia or oxygen starvation due to insufficient circulation. If one of the coronary arteries becomes obstructed by accumulated deposits, the heart muscle will be starved for oxygen and an individual will suffer a heart attack.

If dietary restrictions and physical activity are not enough to lower elevated cholesterol levels, medical therapy is very effective. A group of drugs called statins have been proven to lower CVD events and deaths when used to manage elevated cholesterol levels. Simvastatin, a drug belonging to the statin class, dramatically lowers the risk of dying from coronary heart disease and other causes by slowing down the production of cholesterol and by increasing the liver's ability to remove the bad cholesterol (low density lipoprotein) already in the blood. Because of their track records, simvastatin has become the drug most often prescribed when a person needs a cholesterol-lowering medication.

With the introduction of an affordable brand of simvastatin which is bioequivalent with the more expensive reference brand, older women will have better chances of managing their cholesterol levels. Doctors who are now more attuned to pharmacoeconomics, which aims to deliver high-quality medicines at affordable prices, are supportive of this particular brand of simvastatin.

Simvastatin has dramatically changed the medical landscape in reducing the incidence of cardiovascular disease in high-risk patient including elderly women. However, patients should be reminded that simvastatin is a prescription drug and should only be bought upon doctor's advice.

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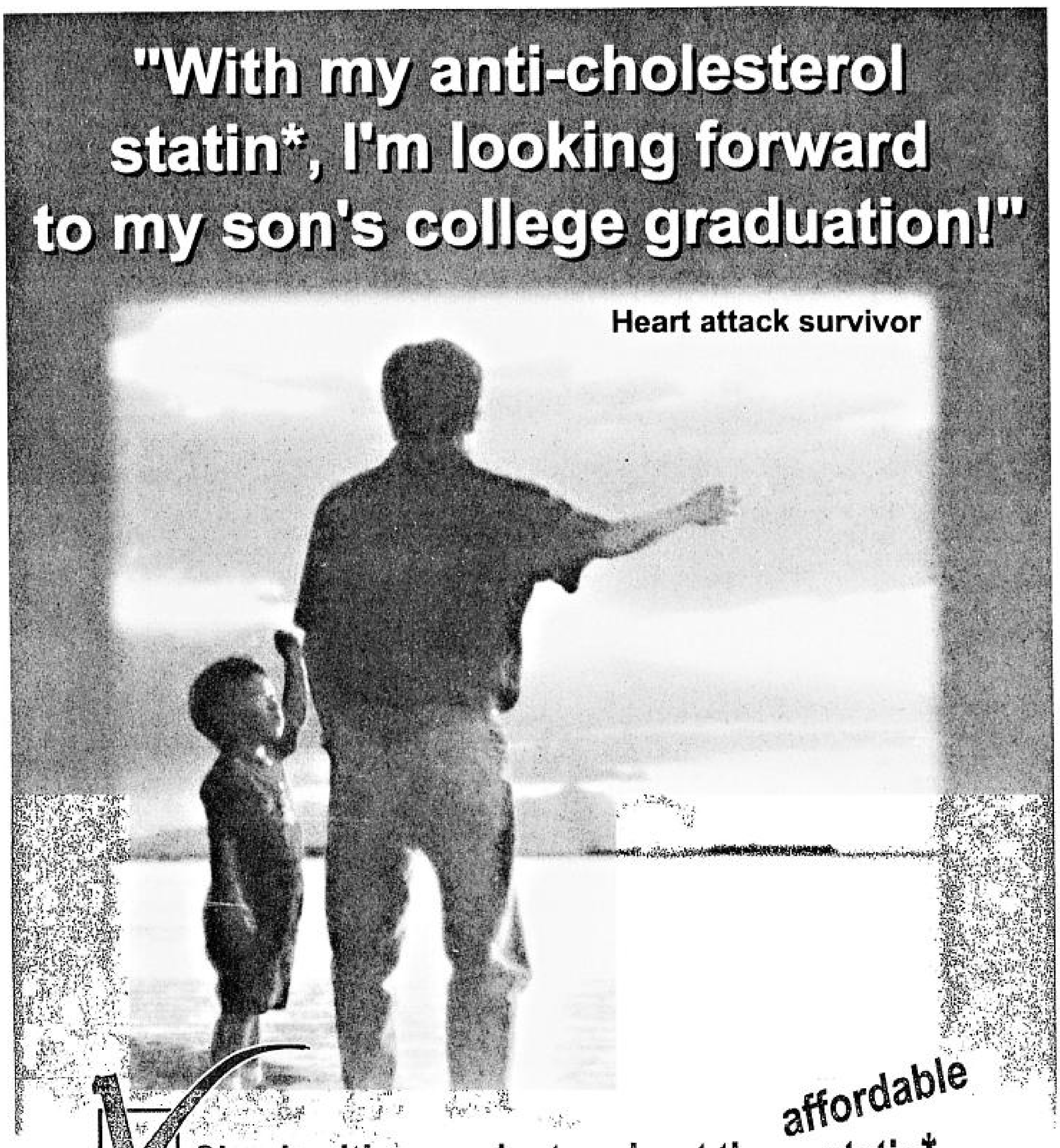

"With my anti-cholesterol statin*, I'm looking forward to my son's college graduation!"
Heart attack survivor

Check with your doctor about the affordable statin*...

* This class of drug is approved for sale by BFAD as a prescription drug and should be bought only with a prescription.

Now for Life!

A public health service announcement from therapharma
A division of UNILAB
ASK YOUR DOCTOR to know more about PHARMACOECONOMICS

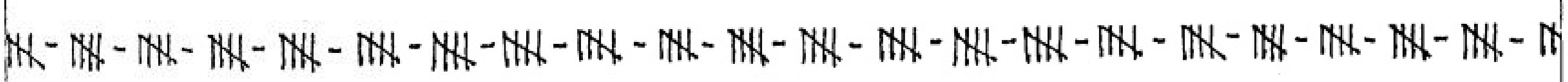
Imedeen is a Winner!

Imedeen has been voted the No. 1 beauty supplement in the UK by Boots customers. This accolade reflects both Imedeen's success as a leading 'internal' skincare brand and Imedeen's prominence within Boots as their top-selling beauty supplement.

Boots is the UK's leading provider of health and beauty products with over 1,400 stores nationwide. One million of their top customers were polled to ask for their positive experiences and favourite products and Imedeen was voted No. 1 in the beauty category—an outstanding level of customer satisfaction backed up by excellent testimonials. One customer claimed 'Imedeen really improved my complexion as it can be very dry at times, but all the dryness cleared and my skin became radiant', while another said 'I have been taking Imedeen for years now and I can honestly say it is the best supplement I have ever used. It really has made a visible difference to my skin'.

The Award was presented to UK General Manager, Suzi Salkeld, by celebrity sports presenter, Kirsty Gallagher, at a press breakfast in London on 20th January 2004.

ADVT.



Lines that count. The only lines that matter for Imedeen are the votes that made it the top* beauty supplement in the United Kingdom. All the other lines–wrinkles, spots, and marks–are made to go away.

IMEDEEN
The Skincare Tablet

*as voted by the customers of Boots, UK's leading health and beauty shop.

Available at Rustan's Shangri-La, Cubao and Harrison Plaza department stores • Mercury Drug, Watson's Personal Care Store, Rose Pharmacy and other leading drugstores • Forever Flawless, Luz Facial Center, The Blue Mountains skincare centers